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SCANDINAVIAN CLASSICS

VOLUME IX

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ANTHOLOGY OF SWEDISH LYRICS

THIS VOLUME IS ENDOWED BY
MR. CHARLES S. PETERSON
OF CHICAGO

ANTHOLOGY OF SWEDISH LYRICS

FROM 1750 TO 1915

TRANSLATED IN THE ORIGINAL METERS BY

CHARLES WHARTON STORK

Author of "Sea and Bay;" Translator of "Selected Poems of Gustaf Fröding"

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TO THE SWEDES

OF THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW

A PEOPLE

BOLD IN SPIRIT, GENEROUS IN HEART

FORWARD-LOOKING IN THOUGHT

AND RICH IN IMAGINATION

THIS VOLUME

IS HUMBLY AND GRATEFULLY

DEDICATED

PREFACE

IF, as Keats has said in his Preface to *Endymion*, there is no fiercer hell on earth than failure in a great object, I confess to feeling myself in a perilous position. It is my privilege in this volume to introduce to readers of English a body of lyric poetry which critics unite in assigning to the highest rank of literary achievement. That I am inadequate to the task may safely go without saying. In defence I may but urge: first, that so fine an opportunity seemed in itself an inspiration; and, secondly, that at least the attempt was not entered upon lightly. And even though the translation falls far below the original, something may have been accomplished.

Further apology would be out of place. It is, however, necessary to state briefly how I have attempted to solve the main questions of technic that presented themselves. In the first place, I have followed pretty strictly the meter and rhyme-scheme of the originals, believing that the form of a given poem is no less essential than is the thought. In the frequent cases where I found it impossible to give at once an exact and an artistic rendering of the content, I have tried to be true to the spirit rather than to the letter. To be successful, a verse translation should, above all things, be poetry. In this adaptation I have sought to preserve at least the integrity and sincerity of tone that characterized the originals. Each separate instance demanded a separate exercise of taste, and in matters of taste one must not defend one's self. Every effort has been made to avoid "translator's

English" and to re-create the lyric impulses of the Swedish into vital English poetry. The success of these attempts is, at best, uneven. To enter equally into the spirit of forty-five poets living through a period of a century and a half and writing in the most diverse and complex verse-forms is too much for the most daring writer to hope. It should be clearly recognized that poetical translation is much more difficult in technic than original poetry, for the simple reason that a man may take liberties with his own still nebulous ideas which he would not think of taking with the recorded thoughts of others.

A word as to the selection of the poems here presented. The accent has purposely been laid on later rather than on earlier lyrists. This was done because the genius of Swedish poetry became more marked as the national character began to develop under freer, more modern, conditions. Further, it seemed advisable to subordinate historic to absolute interest in an initial volume. Consequently the eighteenth century poets, except Bellman, have been passed over hurriedly, and attention has been concentrated on the period from 1870 to the present time. Fourteen living poets are included; chiefly, it is believed, on their merits, but also partly to bring Swedish poetry near to the present generation of American and English readers.

The accent in selection has also been strongly laid upon nine principal poets. The wealth of material was so great that it seemed better to bring out a few figures in detail than attempt to do proportional justice by all. The scholar will find many cases of omission and neglect which can only be

excused by the considerations just given. After all, if the reader obtains a fair idea of Bellman, Tegnér, Runeberg, Rydberg, Snoilsky, Fröding, Levertin, Heidenstam, and Karlfeldt, the method of the volume will be justified on practical grounds. It is believed that a sufficiently wide variety, both in substance and in form, has been given to represent moderately well the lyric poetry of Sweden as a whole. All the poems included are complete except Lidner's "Spastara's Death" and Wallin's "The Angel of Death," both of them too long to appear in full and too important to be disregarded.

The Introduction has been made as compact as possible, with the idea that it should be illustrated by reference to the translations of any given poet. For the same reason rather little is said about form, as the English stanzas give at least the scheme on which the music of the Swedish poems is modelled. The Biographical Notes are mainly statistical, repeating necessarily much of the Introduction. The General Notes give only such details as seem to be required for the understanding and enjoyment of the text.

The debt of gratitude which underlies all others is to the American-Scandinavian Foundation and its efficient Secretary, Dr. Henry Goddard Leach, since it was through the Foundation that I was put in touch with most of the persons who assisted me in preparing the volume. Besides details too numerous to mention, the Foundation instituted in the *Svenska Dagblad* a popular vote as to favorite lyric poems of Swedish literature. The result was valuable

both as affording a body of poetry from which to choose and as giving the proportionate popularity of the chief lyrists. They stood as follows: Fröding 37 poems, Heidenstam and Karlfeldt each 27, Rydberg and Snoilsky each 22, Levertin 15, Tegnér 13, Runeberg 8, Fallström 7, Stjerne and Topelius each 6, Geijer and Österling each 4, Wirsen, Malmström, Bellman, Strindberg, and Ossian-Nilsson each 3, scattering 32. For help in selection I am also indebted to Miss Greta Linder of Stockholm, to Mrs. A. B. Fries of Birmingham, Alabama, to Count Axel Raoul Wachtmeister, and to the managers of The Albert Bonnier Publishing House in New York. The Swedish anthologies, *Ur Svenska Sången* by Karl Warburg, *Ny Deklamationsbok* by Wavrinsky, and *Svensk Vers*, a selection of poems for school reading, have been of the greatest service.

For the actual translation the assistance of Mr. Ernst W. Olson of the Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Illinois, has been invaluable. He has not only collated the entire manuscript with the Swedish to test its accuracy, but has been most helpful in suggesting emendations of an artistic nature. The present text embodies dozens of lines and scores of phrases which are the work of Mr. Olson. As, however, his advice has not been followed invariably, he should not be held jointly responsible for passages to which exception may be taken. Mrs. Fries and Count Wachtmeister have also helped in solving special difficulties.

The poems of Fröding, perhaps the most important poet represented, have been taken from a volume entitled *Gustaf Fröding, Selected Poems*, published by The Macmillan Com-

pany. They are reprinted here with the courteous permission of the publishers. Certain other poems have appeared previously in *Harper's Magazine*, *The New York Nation*, *The Bookman*, and *The Independent*. They are here included by the kind consent of the proprietors.

C. W. S.

"*Birdwood*," *Philadelphia*
June 14, 1917

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INTRODUCTORY SKETCH

SWEDISH LYRIC POETRY FROM 1718 TO 1915

SWEDEN, together with the other nations of the Scandinavian stock, inherited the splendid tradition of Old Norse literature, its eddas and sagas, both in verse and prose. In the thirteenth century the Swedish language began to develop a separate identity, but did not for a long time produce anything of special note. It is indeed remarkable that a country of such political importance as Sweden should have played so small a part in letters during the renaissance. Authors were few and, apart perhaps from Georg Stiernhielm (1598–1672), none became known beyond the borders of his native country.

Period of Preparation, 1718–1771

It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that Swedish literature began to be a real force. With the death of Charles XII in 1718 the hope of a Swedish Empire vanished and the Swedish people turned from foreign conquest to internal development. It must not be forgotten, however, that Sweden had already a brilliant past to celebrate in literature when the time of great doers gave place to a time of great writers.

The inspiration and the models for a national literature were derived first from France and England; from the former for poetry and the drama, from the latter chiefly for prose. As in other countries of Europe, the main standards

of writing were correctness and good taste. In poetry the qualities of clear thinking and graceful phrasing predominated strongly over those of sincere emotion and personal expression. In a word, Sweden evolved a "polite" literature. From time to time echoes of native folk-song crept into the lyric, but as a whole the period was chiefly valuable in fixing the character of the language and establishing patterns of smooth versification.

Modern Swedish Literature, as critics call it, begins with Olof von Dalin (1708–1763). Dalin imitated Addison in the essay and Racine in the drama, besides writing a number of epic and lyric poems in approved Augustan style. His longer poems were allegoric or satiric, his famous epic *Swedish Freedom* (in praise of Queen Ulrica Eleanora) being written in Alexandrines on the model of Voltaire's *Henriade*. His lyrics, which alone properly concern us here, are mostly graceful pastoral pieces, with a freshness and lightness in part, at least, of native derivation. A literary *salon* was established about 1753 by Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht, who introduced personal feeling into the Swedish lyric by her volume *The Sorrowing Turtledove*, a collection of lyrics the contents of which can be sufficiently well imagined from the title. To this *salon* came Gustaf Filip Creutz and Gustaf Fredrik Gyllenborg, authors of idylls, fables, and didactic poems. Gyllenborg wrote "The Seasons," in imitation of Thomson. Important as were all of these writers from a historical point of view, it can hardly be said that they exhibited anything like genius.

Gustavian Period, 1771–1809

The anthologist finds little to pause over until he comes to the poetry of Karl Mikael Bellman (1740–1795), but here he must linger long. One can hardly appreciate this master of improvisation without a glance at the circumstances under which he created his extraordinary songs.

Gustavus III, who came to the throne in 1771, aspired to play the rôle of a Northern *grand monarque* and succeeded measurably in his ambition. He dominated his nobles, won popularity from the common people by his firm administration, and cultivated successfully the arts both of war and peace. A beneficent tyranny has often been considered the ideal condition for the artist; it was so certainly during the reign in question. Gustavus III gave his subjects leisure and contentment, and was the centre of a brilliant court. In 1786 he established the Swedish Academy, to standardize language, further the interests of literature, and honor the memory of great men. This institution, which is still active, had among its original members Gyllenborg, Kellgren, and Leopold, of whom the last two will be noticed presently. Gustavus III set himself strongly against the current of the French Revolution; from his autocratic methods and exorbitant taxes he became unpopular, and was finally assassinated by a conspiracy of nobles in 1792. His son, Gustavus IV, attempting a similar rule, was deposed in 1809.

The period from 1771 to 1809, known as the Gustavian Period, is obviously very similar to that of Louis XIV in France and of the Age of Queen Anne and the early

Georges in England. However faulty it may have been politically, it was an ideal time for writers of the Augustan sort. And of such, with all his fire, we must reckon Bellman. Freed from political unrest by the autocracy of the king, and from private cares by a sinecure position, this troubadour of Stockholm had no other concern than to enjoy life and diffuse his enjoyment among all around him.

Although Bellman early showed a literary bent (together with a distaste for business), we are justified in reckoning him as a Gustavian from the fact that by far his best known poems, included in the volumes *Fredman's Epistles* and *Fredman's Songs*, were composed in the years 1766 to 1777 and not published until 1790. These poems are improvisations to music, which was likewise improvised by the poet in the ardor of the moment. They depict with magical truth and spirit the care-free life of Bellman and his friends in Stockholm and its environs. *Fredman* deals mainly with externals, and his simple philosophy may be summed up in the injunction: No matter how hard things may be, keep up your spirits! Wine, woman, and song are the chief *motifs*, and gayety the prevailing mood, of these volumes, but no lyrics could be more essentially original than Bellman's. A dash, a humorous fervor, and a strange pathetic grimness in this poetry combine to make it supremely personal. Though Bellman was a true Augustan in many respects, with the Augustan merits of smoothness and clarity, his vivid soul transcended the age in which he lived. He is, as it were, the Mozart of Swedish lyric poetry.

Like all great masters, Bellman reconciles the opposing elements of style and substance, of form and fire. His content reminds one somewhat of the pictures of Rome in Horace's *Epistles*. Fredman, who is the poet himself, introduces his readers to an intimate circle of friends: to Movitz, to Mollberg, to Amaryllis, to Ulla Vinblad, and the rest. With them we witness the life of Stockholm: the world awakening at daybreak after rain, a funeral, a concert, a visit to a sick friend, and various idyllic excursions into the neighboring parks and villages. The little world lives and we live in it. Considering this phase of Bellman's genius, the critic will pronounce him a realist of the first order. But when one notes his dazzling mastery of form, his prodigal variety of meter and stanza, his ease and spontaneity, one is equally tempted to call him a virtuoso of lyric style.

It was Bellman's combination of talents that made him the idol of high and low alike in his own time, and the favorite figure of Swedish literature for later generations. No foreigner can hope to realize what he has meant to his fellow-countrymen. He has given them an inimitable picture of life, and a perennial fountain of tuneful gayety, through the medium of a lovable, deeply human personality.

The chief conventional poets of the Gustavian Period are Kellgren, Leopold, and Anna Maria Lenngren. Of Kellgren, the leading satirist of Sweden, it is said that "he struck mighty, flashing blows for truth, right, and good sense." Leopold, less keen and more didactic, lived on into the next age to combat the tendencies of the romantic

movement. Anna Maria Lenngren, the only woman poet of marked ability in the Swedish Parnassus, wrote attractive poems of sentiment and made skilful caricatures of the social foibles then prevalent. All of these writers employed clear-cut verse-forms based on the Alexandrine, the octosyllabic couplet, and the quatrain, though with some latitude as regards the rhyme scheme. Compared with Bellman's, their style is as a rippling brook beside a rushing torrent.

The most original Gustavian after Bellman was Bengt Lidner (1757–1793). Lidner's brief career is none the less melancholy in that most of his misfortunes were of his own making. Suffice it to say here that he became estranged from his kind and took it upon him to celebrate those equally afflicted; such at least is the motive of his masterpiece, "The Death of Spastara." Lidner has imagination and emotional power, but suffers from a tendency to rant. In this respect he reminds one of his English contemporary Collins in the "Ode on the Passions." Frans Mikael Franzén (1772–1847), the first of a remarkable line of Finnish poets writing in Swedish, also caught echoes of the romantic spirit awakening in England and Germany. Franzén is equally famous for hymns and for convivial songs; in both fields he is sincere, vigorous, and a competent master of form. Another hymnodist who helped to bridge the chasm between the older and the newer order is Johan Olof Wallin, whose nobly rhetorical "The Angel of Death" is a sort of Gray's "Elegy" to his countrymen.

The Romantic Impulse, 1809–1830

The political and social conditions which concern Swedish literature from 1809 to the present day can be briefly summarized. By the war of 1808–9 Finland was lost to Russia. After a short interregnum the succession was fixed upon the French marshal Bernadotte, who ascended the throne in 1818 as Charles XIV. He and his successors have reigned prosperously, with the cordial support of both nobles and commons, down to the present time. The royal family have been not only generous patrons of art, but have included among themselves poets and painters of distinction. Owing to the conservative character of the nation, democracy has progressed steadily and without violence. New ideas have of course come in, and through greater facilities of study and travel Sweden has become to some extent cosmopolitanized. This, however, has not been at the expense of national pride and a sturdy love of the soil, which have always been fundamental traits of all classes in the land. As a consequence, the art and literature of Sweden from 1809 until now have been increasingly autochthonous.

With the absolutism of the Gustavian Period passed away the ideals and conventions of polite literature. Romanticism was at first exhibited partly in the freer expression of individual feeling, partly in the idealizing of Sweden's legendary past. Then, after a brief exuberance of sentiment, realism and a heightened imagination began to replace the formalism of the eighteenth century. In the fusion of these apparent opposites lies the greatness of

Swedish literature, particularly in the field of the lyric. A firm hold on the facts of life and a splendid imaginative power in interpreting them account for the fascination exercised by the poetry of Sweden over all who come under its influence. But the poet, conservative like his brother the statesman, has never lost the feeling of stylistic beauty as an end in itself. He is a fine and careful craftsman. Varied and surprising as are the rhymes and meters of the Swedish lyric, they are all such as may be easily enjoyed by the old-fashioned lover of poetry. Though freedom has increased, rhyme and regularity of meter have seemed practically indispensable. Consequently, poetry in Sweden more than in any other occidental country belongs to all classes of society as an active and, in the main, harmonizing social force. From 1870 on, the ideas introduced are daring and dissimilar enough for the most advanced thinker, but at least there is neither charlatanry nor obscurantism of form.

Having attempted a general characterization of Swedish literature since 1809, we may now proceed to consider the phases which came into evidence before 1830. As we have briefly indicated, Romanticism first showed itself in two ways. Each of the phases was cultivated by a special group of writers, these two groups being known respectively as the Phosphorists and the Gothic Society. It was the younger group that first came into prominence.

In 1803 Lorenzo Hammarsköld introduced into Sweden the ideas of the German Romanticists Tieck, Schelling, and the Schlegels. This led to the formation of the Aurora

Society by Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom and Vilhelm Fredrik Palmblad. To the ridicule of the Academicians the young poets retorted in their magazines *Polyfem* and *Fosforos*, from the latter of which they were given the designation "Phosphorists." Their chief canon was Schelling's dictum that beauty is the highest form in which divinity reveals itself. In practice the Phosphorists followed the same course as did many of the English Romanticists. In the first place, emotion largely took the place of mind as the motive force in poetry. This led in some degree to sentimentalism, but it brought about a much-needed emancipation from the fetters of didacticism. Secondly, there was a great search for remote and ideal beauty. Italian and Spanish writers of the renaissance were sought, Shakespeare came into new favor, and mediaeval German poetry was in particular demand. As a result, new regions were opened to poetry and new poetic forms were developed.

Of the Phosphorists by far the most gifted was Atterbom (1790–1855). The titles of his volumes: *Flowers*, *The Blue Bird*, and *The Isle of Happiness* indicate the idealistic and allegorical character of the poetry. But Atterbom is no mere sentimentalist; he is a pure lyrist of exquisitely airy charm, and his genius finally won its way into the very stronghold of his enemies, a place in the Academy. Among those influenced by the Phosphorist movement were Stagnelius and Almqvist. With some exaggeration Stagnelius has been called the Swedish Shelley; his characteristic poems, of a vaguely philosophic and melancholy tinge, are less known to-day than his little folk-idyll "The Necken."

But he had a true sense of beauty, and his early death, at the age of thirty, threw a romantic glamor over his name. Almqvist, the leading prose writer of his time, wrote a number of striking, but rather fantastic lyrics. The number of Atterbom's followers is legion. Their style is described with sympathetic satire by a much later poet, Gustaf Fröding, in "An Old Room:"

> words
> That tell of love and Persian birds,
> Of nightingales that never cease
> And violets' perfumed sighs,
> Of roses' pain and lilies' peace
> In that far paradise.

The other phase of early Romanticism was more virile and substantial, being in fact an expression of newly-awakened national spirit. As the people came to have a greater share in the government, they began to take a more vital interest in both the past and the present of their country. An important evidence of this is the formation of the Gothic Society in 1811 and the publication of their magazine *Iduna*. The founder, Erik Gustaf Geijer, was soon joined by Esaias Tegnér.

Tegnér (1782–1846) is the most widely known of Swedish poets. He is chiefly famous for his epics, of which *Frithiof's Saga* has been translated into English a score of times. It is a romantic story of legendary days told in a series of lyrical episodes reminding the English reader a little of Scott and much more of Longfellow. The latter was much influenced by Tegnér and translated portions

of *Frithiof's Saga* and another of his narrative poems, "The Children of the Lord's Supper." Although Tegnér has great narrative talent, it may perhaps be questioned whether he is a poet of the first order. With an excellent command of form, he seldom rises to a high imaginative level. His lyrics are extremely varied in subject, ranging from the lightest humorous pieces to his "Song to the Sun," an attempt at the cosmic. His "Voices of Peace" and "The Eternal" are high-minded treatments of abstract themes which recall the style of Schiller. "The Giant" takes us back to Norse mythology with a meter founded on old Teutonic accentual verse, "Birds of Passage" is realistic, and a personal note is struck in "Farewell to My Lyre."

Geijer resembles his contemporary, but is less noteworthy. His well-known poem "The Viking" is similar to Longfellow's treatment of the theme in "The Skeleton in Armor." He is less varied and more national in tone than Tegnér. Perhaps his most attractive poem is "The Little Charcoal-Burner Boy," the precursor of Malmström's exquisite lyric "The Sigh of the Forest." Geijer and Tegnér had many followers. Unlike the Phosphorists, the National School, as we may call it, has grown in influence and continues to produce much of the best poetry written in Swedish. This is due, of course, to the fact that it deals with mythological and traditional material which is indigenous to the soil. There is an increasing tendency to choose subjects from modern history and every-day life, and to adopt a more direct style.

The Mid-Century, 1830–1870

The period succeeding the birth of Romanticism was crowded with poets of merit, following variously the impulses of the Phosphorists and the Gothic Society. There was, however, no idealist to equal Atterbom and no bard to celebrate the Viking Age with the success of Tegnér. There was no doubt a gain in sanity and naturalism, but neither of these virtues is of prime importance in the field of poetry. There was likewise an increase of interest in the middle classes, not often good subjects for the lyric muse. This was the great period of the novel; the period of Fredrika Bremer and Emilie Flygare-Carlén, who acquired in prose the reputation which their sex had failed to win in verse. Within the earlier half of the period fall the realistic stories of Almqvist, within the latter the historical tales of Viktor Rydberg, whose poetry belongs to the following period. The one great poet of the time stands out as an isolated figure.

No Swedish poet has a reputation more firmly grounded than Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804–1877). A native of Finland, he grew up amid memories of the valiant though unsuccessful war for freedom waged by his country against Russia. His training was derived partly from the classics, but still more from the people and scenery of his own land. As a result, he became a classical realist, in the same sense as Goethe in *Hermann und Dorothea*. He began his career with a charming lyric volume, *Idylls and Epigrams*, and continued with the idyllic epics, *The Elk Hunters*, *Hanna*, and *Christmas Eve*. In *Nadeschda* and *King Fjalar* his subjects

were more remote and his treatment more romantic. These poems are superior to Tegnér's *Frithiof's Saga* in epic simplicity and naturalism. A classic restraint in the style of Runeberg prevents him from making the sentimental appeal of Tegnér.

After all, there is no test of poetic greatness so conclusive as the lyric, and in the substance of his lyrics Runeberg clearly excels his rival. Besides the early volume already mentioned, we have to consider the most famous of all Runeberg's works, *The Stories of Ensign Stål*, a series chiefly of dramatic ballads on the war with Russia. In directness of style and noble simplicity of mood these poems are beyond praise. They include the impassioned stanzas of "Our Land," the national hymn of Finland, and "The Soldier Boy," which called forth the special praise of Mr. Edmund Gosse for its "absolute perfection." The great majority of the poems are of an heroic or elegiac narrative type, and it may be questioned whether any one poet has ever created a finer body of patriotic verse. Mr. Gosse tentatively mentions Campbell, Dobell, and Tennyson's "Charge of the Light Brigade," but he is probably well aware that English poetry has in this field no rival to the laureate of Finland. All the lyrics of Runeberg are cast in classic form. The artistic artlessness of the style performs its office with a dignity that is rare even in the great masters. The idyllic and reflective lyrics are full of a lucid and quiet beauty which, like the dramatic force of the ballads, is entirely *sui generis*. Runeberg was also a hymnodist, a

critic, and a dramatist of distinction. What wonder that upon his grave are inscribed his own lines:

> Not with grief thy memory would we honor,
> Like to his who goes and is forgotten.

We shall pass over the other poets of the mid-century period rather rapidly. They belong in general to two phases of the national movement: first, specifically patriotic poetry; and secondly, poetry of nature and peasant life. Both of these phases, as we have seen, are conspicuous in the poetry of Runeberg, whose influence soon became extensive. There is, of course, a much wider divergence of personality in this time of increasing individualism than could have been the case in the Gustavian Age. Humor also began to play a greater part, as if in anticipation of the style of Fröding.

Of the patriotic group may be mentioned first Karl Vilhelm August Strandberg, a vigorous poet, author of the Swedish national hymn. Here, too, partly belongs Gunnar Wennerberg, though he is better known for his humorous dialogues in verse. There is a tone of conviction in Swedish patriotic poetry which raises it above the conventionality common to this form. Modernist ideas are represented by Oscar Patrik Sturzen-Becker.

Of the larger group, the nature poets, the best are Zacharias Topelius and Bernhard Elis Malmström, the former a genius nearly, if not quite, of the first order. Topelius, like Runeberg a native of Finland, is one of the most winsome and lovable of poets. His pure and delicate fancy is best shown in his narrative "The Milky Way." His sympa-

thy with nature appears in "Rose-Marie" and song about "Little Maia;" his tenderness, the most outstanding characteristic of his genius, is at its best in "My Mother." Sincere feeling is also a leading quality in the work of the less prolific poet, Malmström, whose lyric, "The Sigh of the Forest," is deservedly one of the best known poems in the language. Herman Sätherberg is a tuneful lyrist, and Elias Sehlstedt has a quaintly personal turn of mind. Two humorous spirits who cannot otherwise be classified are the satirist, Wilhelm von Braun, and the genial dialect poet, F. A. Dahlgren.

The Realistic Impulse, 1870–1900

After the publication of *The Stories of Ensign Stål* in 1860 there was a decided ebb in Swedish poetry, no new names of significance appearing for nearly a decade. Poetry had been becoming too "pleasant," it held no clear-cut thought, had no ring in its verse music. Observation there was, but little vision; sentiment, but no passion. This stagnation was broken by two successive waves, which came about the years 1870 and 1890. Thus from 1870 to 1900 the Swedish lyric attained its highest level, the first impulse containing two poets of genius, and the second three.

The most important phase of the new poetic movement was a more positive bent towards realism, but the first author to be considered is not wholly or even principally a realist. Viktor Rydberg (1828–1895) was of humble extraction. He had a hard struggle to satisfy the thirst for learning which was a leading passion of his life, but he

finally attained distinction in several fields of scholarship. His first creative literary work was done in the historical novel, and it was not until late in life that he found the finest expression of his genius in lyric poetry.

Rydberg is primarily a classic idealist; he treats the great questions of humanity with a clearness and loftiness of purpose which reminds us of Matthew Arnold. We cannot escape the feeling that Rydberg is a greater poet than Arnold; less bookish, less cold, less mournfully aloof. It has been said with much truth by a recent critic, Mrs. A. B. Fries, that Rydberg has the philosophy of Emerson, the optimism of Browning, and the music of Shelley. He has a singularly noble philosophy of life, but somehow he has also the ability to bring his inspiration close to the general mind. His literary sources were many. He was a classicist and had a deep knowledge of the Bible; he made a fine translation of Goethe's *Faust*, and was notably affected by the lyrical music of Poe, whose "Raven" he rendered successfully into Swedish verse. Then, too, there is a manliness in Rydberg's voice which makes the notes carry. His ideas are not the shadows of others, they are his own by strong conviction. All of this is imparted in a style that is well-nigh perfect in its appropriateness and finished beauty. To the lover of "poetical poetry" Rydberg must rank with the greatest names of the century, but he is also a master of simpler themes. In such poems as "The House-Goblin" (*Tomten*) and "The Bathing Children" he gives us intimate pictures of Swedish country life, which to some will be worth more than all of his more abstract and

symbolic pieces. In the originality and forcefulness of his imagery Rydberg marks an important advance in Swedish poetry.

The other leader in the revival of poetry was a man of opposite extraction and training. Count Carl Snoilsky (1841–1903) was a nobleman of Polish descent. Exiled from the Swedish court for a social misdemeanor, he lived most of his life abroad as an epicurean lover of beauty. The first-fruits of his travels was a very brilliant volume of poems descriptive of the author's life in Italy, which appeared in 1869. The spirit and glowing color of the verse took Sweden by storm. Not since Goethe had a Northern writer brought so vividly before his people the dreamy beauty of the Mediterranean and the vista of classic civilization. Besides the autobiographical pieces, this volume contains some of the most finished sonnets in Swedish. The keynote of the whole is struck in a stanza of the "Introductory Song:"

> No vapid fictions of dream I bring you,
> No empty visions for your behoof;
> The world of beauty I fain would sing you
> My own five senses have put to proof.

Snoilsky thus comes out as a realist against sentimentalism.

But even in this early volume we find a love of democracy which was to prevail over that of mere sensuous beauty in the poet's development. Snoilsky discovers more inspiration in Garibaldi than in the study of archaeology. In later poems he strongly advocates a poetic beauty that will descend from its pedestal and minister to thirsty multitudes

of common folk (see "The Porcelain Factory" and "Aphrodite and the Knife-Grinder"). There are also many good reflective lyrics in the volumes that appeared after 1880. Snoilsky yields to Rydberg in symmetry of proportion, but rivals him in finely wrought detail. A long collection of ballads from Swedish history is, to the foreigner at least, decidedly less effective, especially when compared with the work of Runeberg. In 1890 Snoilsky was restored to favor and returned to his native land, and this event helped to kindle a new enthusiasm in Swedish poetry. Though not so distinctive a master as Rydberg, Snoilsky exercised a more immediate influence on younger poets by the contagious fervor of his style.

Among the contemporaries of Rydberg and Snoilsky should be mentioned, in patriotic verse, King Oscar II and Edvard Bäckström. Further, two poets of unusual and pervasive personality were the Jewish painter, Ernst Josephson, and the reactionary, Carl David af Wirsén. Albert Teodor Gellerstedt is the greatest of Swedish lyrists in the sententious epigram. Of August Strindberg (1849–1912), the much misunderstood ultra-realist, we can only pause to say that his few lyrics, though not of first-rate importance in his work as a whole, are yet characteristic of his vigorous genius. Albert Ulrik Bååth (1853–1912), another pioneer realist, delights in sympathetic pictures of plain folk in every-day life.

Just when the new wave of poetic impulse seemed to have reached its height, it was overtaken and overtopped by

another. By this time the realistic tendency of the period had become clearly marked, though it was a realism as often subjective as objective. Realism, if one may venture a new definition, is a resolute facing of facts, whether they be those of the outer world or of the inner consciousness. No antagonism exists between realism and imagination; there is romantic imagination, such as in *The Idylls of the King*, on the one hand; and realistic imagination, such as in the *Barrack-Room Ballads*, on the other. The prime requisite of the realist is courage; his danger lies in a certain crudity and hardness of tone.

About 1890 appeared in Swedish literature—to quote Mr. Edmund Gosse—"three very great lyrical artists: Fröding, Levertin, and Heidenstam." As an interpreter of the peasant, not even Burns is superior to Gustaf Fröding (1860–1911). Born of a middle-class family in the pastoral region of Vermland, he was ideally fitted to interpret the boisterous humor and the stark tragedy of this province. His first volume, *Guitar and Accordion*, had a success unprecedented in Swedish literature. The daring, the forcefulness, the magic of his verse are capable of rendering every phase of the rough life he shared. Scenes of ranting merriment, tales of grim cruelty, exquisite nature pictures, passages of broad humor—all these are given with a directness and spontaneity of style which is no less than astounding.

Other volumes followed quickly up to 1898 when, as the result of dissipation, the poet's mind broke down completely. After a long period in the hospital, Fröding was restored to reason, but he never recovered his early power.

Yet the work of his brief creative period shows a wide range. Besides his Vermland lyrics, he has lively sketches of city life; strange self-revelations, whimsical and pathetic; and a large number of purely ideal and imaginative poems. If his first volume is like Burns, his others display a passionate and ironic personality similar to that of Heine. Fröding had a university training and turned his wide reading to the best account. Of his Swedish predecessors he is most like Bellman, the differences in their poetry being more those of scene than of temperament. Fröding, a true modern, takes the ills of life more to heart; he exhibits the *weltschmerz* in its most acute forms, isolation and despair. With these comes a deeper sympathy for his suffering fellow-mortals, a sympathy that extends even to so grewsome a being as the troll of Norse mythology. His religious creed is Universalism. Still, in general, Bellman's joy of life, and above all his bewildering mastery of form, are present undiminished in the poetry of Fröding.

Oscar Levertin (1862–1906) is a poet of some intensity, but otherwise is totally unlike Fröding. Of Spanish-Jewish descent, he inherited the spiritual mysticism and love of beauty that characterize the Jew in every land. Among Swedish poets his style is quite by itself, recalling that of Rossetti. Like Rossetti he shows an inclination both for the ethereal and for the sensual. His precarious health imparted a quality of morbidness to his poetry. His lyrics are all personal and nearly all symbolic. He is the typical poet of the ivory tower, with a tenuous detachment of imagination that makes him seem to move in a rarefied atmos-

phere of beauty. The finest critic in Swedish literature, he exhibits a subtle and delicate craftsmanship that gives a unique delight to his admirers. In an age of individualism such figures as those of Fröding and Levertin, of Kipling and Francis Thompson, will often be found side by side. After all, as has been already suggested, a very genuine courage is required to be true in portraying one's inner self, and there is a spiritual realism in such poets as Levertin and Thompson that is more akin to objective realism than to the romantic sentiment of a Tegnér or a Tennyson.

Verner von Heidenstam, recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1916, yields to neither of his colleagues in originality or importance. Oldest of the triumvirate (he was born in 1859), he is still at the height of his powers. His literary career has been singularly like that of Snoilsky. Highly favored by birth and education, he spent his early manhood in travel, of which his first volume, *Pilgrimage and Wander-Years*, is the imaginative record. This book discloses at once the earnestness and intellectual nobility of the author. The subject-matter is personal, but with a passion for truth rather than, as in the case of Levertin, for beauty. The style is abrupt, involved, and reserved; rather difficult, and very individual. The poet's peculiar gift is his ability to penetrate beneath the surface of things to their spiritual reality. Despite its complexity, the volume was enthusiastically received.

Like Snoilsky, Heidenstam changed from an exotic to a national tone. In his travels he learned to value rightly the scenes of his birth, and his two later volumes of lyrics

are saturated with Sweden. His themes continue to be often introspective and gloomy, but his maturity gives them a wider application. His best-known poems are those that deal with his larger self, namely, his native land. In such lyrics as "A Day," "Invocation and Promise," and "Sweden" he sends forth clarion notes to his fellow-countrymen, bidding them revive the ancient glory of their land and raise Sweden to a new eminence in the realm "of science and art and letters." Without loss of intensity, his style has attained to greater breadth and power. Famous as Heidenstam has become in prose with his novels and historical sketches, it is chiefly through his lyrics that he has come to mean Sweden in the hearts of his five and a half million compatriots.

Heidenstam has been included with a past generation because his influence began at the same time as that of Fröding and Levertin, and two of his three poetical volumes appeared in the last century. Other living lyrists will be treated in the following division. Of deceased writers we must note the Finn, Karl August Tavaststjerna, for his quality of deep and quiet melancholy; and Tor Hedberg, dramatist and reflective poet.

The Poetry of To-Day, 1900–1915

It is proverbially difficult to judge a rising generation, but certainly Swedish poetry to-day is in a very active and healthy condition. It would seem that the poets of the twentieth century may be divided pretty clearly into three classes: namely, (1) nature poets, (2) socialist poets, and

(3) esthetes. Of these the first group is by far the most extensive, and includes Erik Axel Karlfeldt, the only one who thus far has attained eminence. The socialist group, though small, is well defined in purpose and increasing in strength. The esthetes are mostly under the influence of such moderns as Verlaine, Oscar Wilde, and Arthur Symons. They despise the vulgar world and would live in the timeless realm of art. Some are mystics, some voluptuaries, each of course going his own way. They are enterprising and have produced much of beauty. Oddly enough, as some may think, with much intelligent experimentation in form, they have done almost nothing in free verse.

The only living poet to vie with Heidenstam in present-day popularity is Karlfeldt. He was born in 1864 in Dalecarlia, the heart of the Swedish peasant district. A product of the soil, his poetry strikes its roots deep in the traditions of sturdy, honest country-folk. It abounds in homely pride of its origin, in love of nature and wild animals, in kindly humor, and in true piety both in the Latin and the Christian sense. The personal lyrics show a lovable temperament, full of reverence for the simple verities of life. The humor lies in a recognition of the prejudices and obtuseness of the peasant, and of the poet's own unfitness for a Parnassus of the conventional sort. Without any ostentation, the style is thoroughly adequate and has felicity and grace of a high order. Fröding and Heidenstam write about the peasantry; the lyrics of Karlfeldt come straight from the peasant heart.

Among the other nature poets, the best known is Daniel

Fallström, a prolific rhyme-smith who treats many subjects with observant sympathy. More winsome is Oscar Stjerne, whose poems of childhood have a tenderness like those of Topelius. Love of home is well expressed by Ola Hansson and Sten Granlund. K. A. Melin writes musical lyrics of the seashore. K. E. Forsslund has more vigor and a decided leaning toward socialism.

We may treat together the classes of political and esthetic modernists. The leader of the socialists is K. G. Ossian-Nilsson, a poet whose style has the strength of glowing conviction. He celebrates the tyrant type, which alone can call forth the virtue of the masses to oppose it. His "Bismarck" contains much good thinking and good writing. Of the esthetes the most notable is the academician, Per Hallström, a finished stylist in the drama, in prose, and in verse. The most fiery is the Finn, Bertel Gripenberg, a veritable twentieth century Heine, who promises to go far. Among the more graceful and mystical figures are Anders Österling, Bo Bergman, H. Söderberg, and Bertil Malmberg. None of these has any peculiarly Swedish characteristic, though each has merit of a cosmopolitan sort, and all have sacrificed the Antaeus-like strength of contact with their native earth for delicacy of sentiment and beauty of form.

General Summary

In the foregoing sketch we have endeavored to trace broadly the development of the Swedish lyric and to characterize the chief poets. This attempt has been unsuccessful if it has failed to indicate that the chief quality of Swedish

poetry is its nationality. As the great painters, Liljefors, Zorn, Larsson, and Fjaestad, have set forth the beauties of Swedish landscape and peasant life, so have the great lyrists represented them in verse. Truth and strength are equally inherent in both phases of artistic expression. As the aforesaid painters have gone far beyond mere photographic verisimilitude, so have the lyrists interpreted their land with daring imagination and finished craftsmanship.

It may very properly be asked what rank the lyric poetry of Sweden should take in respect to that of other literatures. To this one ventures to reply that in quality it is inferior to none, and in richness it is not far behind the best of any nation during a similar period of time. This opinion is based upon careful study and upon comparison with the judgment of many critics well versed in European literature of all ages. Such an opinion will doubtless appear partial to those who are approaching the subject for the first time, but a similar statement as to the merits of the Russian novel would have been received a generation ago with similar incredulity. For the present the Swedish Muse must abide the test of time and of closer scrutiny. Her admirers dare to hope that before long the names of Bellman, Runeberg, Rydberg, Fröding, and Heidenstam — possibly also of Tegnér, Topelius, Snoilsky, Levertin, and Karlfeldt — will be generally ranked with those of the greatest masters in the domain of lyric poetry.

ANTHOLOGY OF SWEDISH LYRICS

Karl Mikael Bellman, 1740–1795

TO OLD MOVITZ, ILL WITH CONSUMPTION

AN ELEGY

Empty your glass! — Behold where Death is waiting,
Sharp'ning his sword while standing at your door!
Be not afraid; he holds ajar the grating,
Then shuts the tomb and leaves it as before.
Movitz, consumption may spare you a year, man, . . .
Be of good cheer, man,
Tune up the chords and sing of youth once more!

Thin is your cheek, and yellow-pale its hue is,
Sunken your chest, your shoulders bent — too bad!
Let 's see your hand — each vein all swelled and blue is,
Flabby and moist, as if a bath you 'd had:
Limp and perspiring your hand is, old fellow, . . .
Come, strike your 'cello,
Pour out the bottle, sing and drink, be glad!

You 're dying fast — so deep your cough is sounding:
Hollow it rings; all 's emptiness within.
White is your tongue, your frightened heart is pounding,
Soft as a sponge are muscles, thews, and skin.
Breathe — Lord! the fumes that come out of your throttle . . .

Hand me the bottle!
Sing of god Bacchus! Here 's your health! Begin!

Out of this flask your death by drops is flowing
All unobserved, as laugh and song go by.
Trust me, a troop of maggots fiercely glowing
Pours from yon glass that now you tilt on high.
You are consumed. Into tears you are turning,
Entrails are burning.
Can you still pledge me one more health? "Ay, ay!"

Well, then, your health! For Bacchus bids farewell now,
From Venus' throne receive your last adieu.
Fondly for her the tide of blood may swell now;
Slight though it be, it warms your body through.
Sing, read, forget, think, or tearfully ponder, . . .
What, are you fonder
Still of your liquor? Die? No. Here 's to you!

FROM "FREDMAN'S EPISTLES," NUMBER 30

CONCERNING MOLLBERG'S PARADE TO CORPORAL BOMAN'S GRAVE

Out of the way, there!—in plumes arrayed the provost flashes,
Swinging his gold axe, he makes a road to pass.
(*Tamborine*—Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) The fifer proud with small moustaches,
Plump-cheeked and blooming, takes out his fife of brass.

Drum starts a-rumbling;
Mollberg leads the mourners' band,
Shouting and mumbling,
Then calls out, "Stand!"

See yonder fool there, that lunatic with arms a-swinging!
He twirls a drum-stick and thumps it on a hide.
(Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) Two cymbals here another 's dinging,
One toots a French horn with cheeks inflated wide.
One goes and hammers
With a pan-hoop on a bar,
His frightful clamors
Resound afar.

Mollberg, your servant! — But see how bow-legged he is walking,
Piously duck-like and smit with tearful gloom!
(Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) And eagerly behind him stalking,
Lejon and Lustig and Lax and Dunderbom.
Tucks up his coat then,
Glances at his belt so fine,
Clears out his throat then:
"Stand! Straighten line!"

Nod back to Mollberg, my lady, I would be advising.
See! he salutes you and grins with jesting air.
(Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) In time upon his heels he 's rising:

"One, two! and one, two!—keep time—together there!"
My what a bearing,
New white boots and splendid rig!
Crape band he 's wearing
And bob-tail wig.

See Dalberg's Kajsa, she 's standing at the window crying,
Timid and squint-eyed, in skirt of sable clad!
(Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) A harp is from the alley sighing,
While plays the fiddle and laughs a soldier lad.
Veiled, with apparel
Like a nun, the widow stands,
Leans on a barrel
With book in hands.

Moves the procession. "Why, who is dead here in the alley?"
"Corporal Boman, the dropsy laid him low."
(Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) See Wingmark mid the friends that rally,
Wig, black rosette, and a handkerchief of snow!
There in the lead he
Goes with Bergström, then not least
Comes tapster Ede,
And next the priest!

There 's organ-blower and tower-man amid the tangle,
Mine host from Sodom, my landlord from The Hole.

(Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) Play up there, hit the shrill triangle!
Thump on the sheep-skin the drummer gives a roll.
Bleared sexton shares too
Place amid the mourners' band,
Keeps time and bears too
His spade in hand!

Corporal Boman has cast his sword and sheath away now.
"Ay, he is dead, sure." "Is dead—unhappy fate!"
(Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) 'T was end of March, I mind the day now,
When last he wet his moustaches at Brown Gate."
Safe here is no man—
For what is our life? A breath.
Thine ashes, Boman,
We hail in death.

Hey! What the devil! Get back in line, you're all astray there!
Right-about! Shoulder arms! Steady, Number Two!
(Ching, chingty, ching, ching!) Present arms! Let the music play there!
In air take aim! Fire!—Ground arms, you donkey, you!
In Bacchus' region
Boman's praise shall echo loud—
Thanks, gallant legion,
We've done him proud!

FROM "FREDMAN'S EPISTLES," NUMBER 38

OF FISHING

Up, Amaryllis! Wake, little sweeting!
Clouds are all fleeting,
Cool the air.
See how the glowing
Rainbow, its flowing
Colors bestowing,
Makes all fair.
Amaryllis, truly I assure thee,
Peace on Neptune's bosom I 'll secure thee.
Let the god of sleep no longer lure thee,
Let him no more overmaster thee there!

Let 's go a-fishing — nets are all spread now —
Mope not in bed now,
Quickly rise!
Come thou, all bodiced,
Kirtled so modest;
Fish of the oddest
Be our prize!
Amaryllis, little one, awaken, —
Lacking thee, of joy I 'm quite forsaken;
From our boat the spray will soon be shaken,
As mid the dolphins and sirens it flies.

Bring rods and lines, and spoon for our trolling!
Up the sun 's rolling —
Hasten thee!

Sweet, let us revel,
Think thou no evil,
Say no uncivil
Nay to me!
Let us sail into the cove so shallow,
Or to yonder sound thy love did hallow,
Erst, when at my fortune that poor fellow
Thyrsis was angry as angry could be.

Come, then, embark and sing with me sweetly!
Love rules completely
In our breast.
Winds that would harm us
Cannot alarm us,
Love still can charm us,
Make us blest.
Happy on the ocean's fretful billow,
As within thine arms my head I pillow,
Unto death my soul thy soul would follow . . .
Sing, O ye sirens, reëcho the rest!

FROM "FREDMAN'S SONGS," NUMBER 31

OF MADAME BERGSTRÖM'S PORTRAIT AT THE INN OF LILYA IN TORSHÄLLA

Hushed the storm that raged at night,
And the stars with paling light
More and more give token
Dawn by now has broken.

Clouds are streaming,
Sunlight beaming,
On the mist and smoke is gleaming.
Breezes blowing soft and gay
Rattle windows with their play;
Maples, aspens rustle,
Roaring fountains bustle.
Black-cock singeth,
Peasant springeth,
Harness on his horse he flingeth.
Fire now skips,
Flutters and licks
Brushwood and chips,
Grasses and sticks.
Porridge cooks on ruddy cinder.
Now with locks awry
Cotter on the sly
Feels about for pipe and tinder;
And a Dalesman lone,
Leaning on a stone,
To the shovel sets his foot.

Now the landlord dons a boot,
Cleans his brandy-still from soot,
Holds his pint-pot, laughing,
In his doorway quaffing;
While he jokes there,
Father smokes there,
Heroes they amid the folks there.

Dame in wagon by the gate
With her hand upholds her pate,
Back and forward swaying,
Nods, in dreamland straying.
Sunlight smarts then,
Dame she starts then,
Sips a glass as she departs then.
Wheels in the mill
Start on their round.
Hark! through the still
Morn comes the sound
Of the first blows from the smithy.
Blacksmith, tall and spare,
To the waist all bare,
Red tongs held with fore-arm pithy,
'Twixt the forge and sand,
Bellows in one hand,
Singeth now his morning prayer.

Winds are romping fresh and fair,
Seeds and plants and flow'rets rare
Open sheath and petal,
Smile where dewdrops settle.
Dawn, all-splendid,
Comes attended
By delight with zephyrs blended,
Forest glimmers darkly blue,
Hills and mountains rise in view;

Lambs and heifers roam there,
Lads and lasses come there.
Loud they hollo
As they follow,
Herding all the flocks that wallow.
Larks in the sky
Wing the cool air,
Roosters near by
Flap wings and blare;
All of Nature turns to duty,
Or as it awakes
Glow and glory takes. . . .
And to treasure all the beauty
Movitz now gets up,
Grabs his color-cup,
Sets his canvas on his knee.

Ha! 't is Madame Bergström — see! —
What a bonnet! Glory be!
With a bosom nosegay,
Pug on arm, she goes gay.
Ear-rings jolly,
Parasol, i'
Faith — Poor Movitz and his folly!
Sure I 'll die with laughing at
Her fop son with shepherd hat,
Fine as anybody;
Beauty-patch, the noddy!

Much to brag on!
See the sag on
Her big double chin, the dragon!
Bosom tight-laced
Juts from her frame—
My what a chaste
Inn-keeper's dame
On your canvas you 've inflicted!
Only will you say
Why she sits, I pray,
With a bird on wrist depicted?
"Ay, the reason 's this,
Bergström's wife it is;
He would take the truth amiss."

FROM "FREDMAN'S EPISTLES," NUMBER 39

A NOTA BENE

WHEN I have a flask well laden—
Nota bene, with good wine,
And thereto a pretty maiden—
Nota bene, who is mine,—
Joy have I in fullest dower—
Nota bene, for an hour.

Gay the time that we inherit—
Nota bene, not all good:
Blows are oft rewards of merit,
Enemies desire our blood.

Many think in bliss to dwell—
Nota bene, bagatelle!

Go your way, life, never falter!
Stop, though—nota bene, there:
Age must never seek to alter
To a witch my sweetheart fair.
Wine and love exalt me high—
Nota bene, till I die.

FROM "FREDMAN'S SONGS," NUMBER 56

OF HAGA

Butterflies to Haga faring,
When the frosts and fogs are spent,
Find the woods their home preparing,
Flower-enwrought their pleasure-tent.
Insects from their winter trances
Newly wakened by the sun
O'er the marsh hold festal dances
And along the dock-leaves run.

Haga, on thy bosom dozes
Many a plot of verdure brave,
And the snowy swan reposes
Proudly on thy rippling wave.
In the woods a distant clamor
Comes reëchoed faint and fine:

From the quarry sounds the hammer,
Axes ring mid birch and pine.

See the little naiads flashing;
Golden horns they lift in air!
Cool cascades are blithely dashing
O'er the heights of Solna fair.
Statues greet the eyes that gaze there
Down the arching forest aisles;
Wheels go by, a dust they raise there—
Kindly then the peasant smiles.

Ah, what joy beyond repeating
Through that lovely park to rove,
To receive the fair one's greeting
While a monarch's eyes approve!
Each of his most gracious glances
Draws the tear of gratitude—
Ay, that royal look entrances
E'en the surly and the rude.

FROM "FREDMAN'S SONGS," NUMBER 64

TO ULLA AT A WINDOW IN FISHERTOWN, NOON OF A SUMMER DAY

Ulla, mine Ulla, to thee may I proffer
Reddest of strawberries, milk, and wine,
Or a bright carp from the fen shall I offer,
Or but a bowl from the fountain so fine?

Truly the flood-gates of heaven are broken—
Rich is the scent of flower and tree—
Drizzling, the clouds now the sun but foretoken,
Thou may'st see.

Chorus

Isn't it delightful, little Fishertown?
"Delightful! Be it spoken."
Here the rows of tree-trunks stretching proudly down
In brand-new gown;
There the quiet reaches
Of the inlet flow;
And off yonder mid the ditches
Ploughed land, lo!
Isn't it delightful—all these meadows, though?
"Delightful, so
Delightful, oh!"

Hail, sweet, who there at the window dost hover!
Hark, how the bells from the city sound!
See how with dust-clouds the carriages cover
All the green hue of the country around!
I in my saddle drowsing survey thee.
Hand from the window, cousin mine,
First a dry rusk and a can of, I pray thee,
Hogland wine.

Isn't it delightful, *etc.*

Off to his stable is led my good charger,
Whinnying, stamping in mad career.
Soon in the doorway he stands. How much larger
Seem now his eyes as he stares at thee here!
Thou dost enkindle all nature with pleasure,
As thy warm eyes enflame now me.
Clang! at thy lattice with heart's fullest measure—
Here 's to thee.

Chorus

Is n't it delightful, little Fishertown?
"Delightful! Be it spoken."
Here the rows of tree-trunks stretching proudly down
In brand-new gown;
There the quiet reaches
Of the inlet flow;
And off yonder mid the ditches
Ploughed land, lo!
Is n't it delightful—all these meadows, though?
"Delightful, so
Delightful, oh!"

FROM "FREDMAN'S EPISTLES," NUMBER 71

Johan Henrik Kellgren, 1751–1795

THE ART OF SUCCEEDING

A SIMPLE RULE OF CONDUCT FOR THE YOUNG

My *dearest boy, become a fool;*
In all things then you will succeed!

This was a prudent mother's rule
When first her son the words could heed:
My dearest boy, become a fool;
In all things then you will succeed!

Sense is a danger to Success,
Which nearly always, merciless,
Takes care that Sense is shown the door.
Wit but annoys with ill-address,
Where Folly pleases more and more
And never gives a worm distress,
But slinks on sidelong to the fore,
Until, while wiser men ignore,
Presto! he wins the longed-for meed.
Ay, wit is but a two-edged tool
The devil must have forged indeed.
My dearest boy, become a fool;
In all things then you will succeed!

While Folly, sleek and fair to see,
Is resting on an eider bed

And flourishes in luxury,
Poor Wit lies pale and ill bested
On hay and straw most woefully;
Sore vexed and sadly underfed,
He gnaws a crust of mouldy bread.
Then fly from Wit as from the pest;
Upon his lips there smirks a jest
Which for all fools is poison dire,
For that fool most whom all the rest
For might and rank do most admire:
And if the dart should stick — what 's worse — in
The thin skin of some holy person,
Which — God mend! — oft occurs indeed,
No man will give, we 're all agreed,
A twopence for Sir Wit again;
For hate, in hearts of saintly breed
Enkindled, only pauses when
It sees its writhing victim feed
The temporal flames, and bids him then
To flames eternal straightway speed.
No, my good lad, obey the rule,
Be a dull Jack, a dolt, a fool;
In all things then you will succeed!

How right was that old lady, lo!
And how we should revere her name!
The Education Board, I trow,
No easier, better course can show
To-day for winning wealth and fame.

How well she knew the world, that dame!
If Corydon, poor studious boy,
Had followed but her son's example,
He 'd stand by now in Fortune's temple.
Those words are gold without alloy,
God keep her blessèd soul in joy!

Anna Maria Lenngren, 1755–1817

THE BOY AND HIS PLAYTHINGS

I saw a little boy who made
A ship of fluff with flags arrayed,
And he rejoiced in it how gladly!
Then came a glum old sage, and he
Said ship and flag were trumpery;
He proved it—gone was all the glee.
Ah, but the sage had acted badly!

The boy then tried another hope,
And in a bowl dissolving soap,
He blew a gaily tinted bubble.
The sage cried out: "How can you dare?
Your mortal fate is symbolled there."
It sank, the boy was in despair.
How came the sage to cause this trouble?

Ye over-clever of our earth,
How little thanks your zeal is worth,
Which holds the glass of truth before us
To snare us all in learning's net!
We are but children, therefore let
Us keep our foolish playthings yet
In happiness, while you ignore us!

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CASTLE AND COTTAGE

THIS peasant cot of mine here
Is mine, though poor it be,
And all their heads incline here
Who come to visit me.

Not many buildings nestle
In this wild neighborhood,
But there 's a cloud-high castle
Up yonder in the wood.

With noisy pomp and riot
Dwells there a nobleman.
I always sleep in quiet,
But that he never can.

A courtier he—worse fortune!—
A splendid star he wears.
Poor lord, though he importune,
How little joy he shares!

One lovely day at gloaming
I sat beside my door,
When sudden I heard coming
His dogs with yelp and roar.

His Grace was past me springing
As I in blissful mood

A hymn of thanks was singing
That God had been so good.

The song I sang that even
Was of a simple kind
I 'd made in praise to Heaven
For calm and peace of mind,

That health and food sustained me,
A Father's care I knew,
That rest from toil was deigned me,
No crime had I to rue.

Leaned on his gun, mayhap then
His Grace had heard my lay.
I ceased and raised my cap then;
He, thoughtful, went his way.

He breathed a sigh of sadness—
I understood it well:
"Ah, give me but your gladness,
And in my castle dwell!"

Mine eyes I then uplifted
To Him who ordereth so:
The high with wealth are gifted,
With happiness the low.

THE PORTRAITS

Upon an old estate from ancient sires descended
A widowed countess dwelt; the years her face had scored,
Infirm she was, drank tea of elder-flowers blended,
On twinges of her legs for weather signs depended,
And oftentimes the dame was to distraction bored.
One day—for reasons unexplored,—
When with her maid she sat where soared
The lofty hall, with gilt and paneled leather splendid,
While, each in its appointed place,
Hung portraits of her high-born race,—
She in her lofty mind bethought:
"If condescendingly I brought
Myself to speak with this dull person,
Perhaps the change would give my gout a small diversion;
Though surely such a stupid flounder
Would comprehend the smallest fraction,
Yet my own lungs would have some action
And this poor simpleton would be quite lost in wonder
On hearing tell of my extraction."

"Susanna," she began at length, "this hall you sweep,
Sweep it each day throughout the year,
You see what likenesses are here;
But gape, half silly, half asleep,
At them, nor guess what folk you keep from cobwebs clear.
Listen! . . . He on the right, sire of my grandsire dear,

Is the much travelled President,
Who knew of every fly the Greek or Latin name;
To the Academy he gave, when home he came,
A lob-worm from the Orient. . . .
Well, next beyond him—in the corner by mischance—
Is my dear only son, the Ensign late-lamented,
Pattern in posture and the dance,
Whom all our hopes were fixed upon,—
Seven new pigtails he invented.
A window-draught he failed to shun,
And a catarrh set in; his glorious course was run.
A marble monument to him shall be erected. . . .
Yon lady, to my ma, the Countess, near connected,
Was in her day esteemed a beauty of much note,
And—if indeed it 's true and not a fabrication—
Helped Queen Christine at coronation
To hook her under-petticoat. . . .
She with the mantle, much admired,
Is my great-aunt—a lovely face! . . .
That old man in the robe attired,
A worthy uncle of our race,
Once played at chess against the Czar of Russia's
Grace. . . .
Yon portrait to the left you see,
That is my sainted spouse, the Colonel.
Who had ability and talent nigh supernal
In partridge-shooting, if not he? . . .
But now look well at yonder dame there
Within the pretty oval frame there,

Who on her swelling breast is wearing a bouquet—
Look hither—not at that one, nay!—
'T is plain to see what pride within her glance reposes,
And mark how nobly curved her nose is!
King Frederick to yon fair, one night, his court would pay,
But she was virtue's self and ever humbly froze his
Fond passion, daring to oppose his
Attention, till abashed: '*Ma chère*,' he had to say,
'You have a parlous offish way.'
Many still live to tell of that affair so naughty.—
Well, don't you recognize her, eh?
Am I not known at once by yonder forehead haughty?"
"But," cried Susanna, "God preserve us!"—
Dropping her shears and needle-case,—
"Can that be meant to be your Grace!!!"
"Be meant to be? . . . What! . . . Leave my service!
Minx, out of doors with you and your unfinished lace!—
The shame! But still it happens rightly
When one essays to talk with such a beast politely."

The Countess had at once a fresh attack of gout;
No moral to this tale has further been found out.

Karl Gustaf af Leopold, 1756–1829

A LEGACY

FIDEIKOMMISS

My dear George, my end is nearing,
But I 'd give you ere I go
Some instructions worth your hearing,
Since to me your birth you owe.

When you 're cold, my boy, go warm you;
When you 've food and appetite,
Eat; come in, when rain would harm you;
When the sun shines, quench your light.
If you 're pressed for time, then hurry;
And if you 're tired, straightway stop.
If you 're sleepy, rest from worry;
When you 've slept it off, get up.
Is your house no longer cheery,
Pack your coffers and begone;
If with travel you grow weary,
Why—go home again, my son.
Flee the danger that affrights you,
Take what joys the fates may send;
Live as long as life delights you,
Die, as I do, at the end.

By these principles directed
You may pass through life in bliss.

Thousands—take it not amiss!—
Live and are by all respected
With no greater art than this.

Bengt Lidner, 1757–1793

SONG OF THE BATTLE-SKALD

O YOUTH, if thou but have the heart
Thy father's path to try,
Go forth to play a hero's part,
And save thy land or die!

The fountain's voice is not so rare
Beside a flowery strand,
The light of day is not so fair
As death for native land.

Through every age the wings of fame
Thy glory shall upraise,
And in eternity thy name
Shall ring in songs of praise.

That name shall win a star also,
A maiden young and free
Shall to thy tomb with roses go,
Thy priestess there to be.

FROM "MEDEA"

INTRODUCTION TO "SPASTARA'S DEATH"

On Nova Zembla's peaks, in vales of parched Ceylon
The man of hapless lot is as my friend and brother;
Hearing his fate, I pay my debt of tears anon,
O Nature, unto thee, thou universal mother.
Not, Heaven, that I dare accuse thy dispensation,
Though on my budding spring was sent the deadly hail;
But should I only count my days of exultation,
'T would prove that in my breast a human heart must fail.
'Twixt fortune's ebb and flood my ship of life is cast,
With feeble Hope to steer, while waves of grief roll past;
No haven through the mist I see.
"You're not alone."—With that console a tiger's heart!
Barbaric solace: that there many be
Who bear in life an equal smart!
Shall that—O gracious God!—allay mine agony?
A thousand thunderbolts upon me fall!
Lucky within the depths of an abyss I 'd call
Myself, were there not men still more unfortunate.
But—law severe of mortal fate!—
At sight of others' pain I grieve in fullest measure,
My blood chills in my veins, upon the rack I lie.
In heaven I could feel no pleasure
If I from earth could hear my fellows cry.
And when, Spastara, with sublime devotion
A sacrifice for love amid the flames you die,
Shall I be spared from sad emotion?
Shall I be hard as—Heaven toward you?

No, to the fountain whence are springing
Your griefs, I bear an offering too.
I take my lute and now with tears begin my singing:
I can no more, no more your shade would have me do.

Franz Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847

CHAMPAGNE

Drink! They dissolve, the faint-whispering
Froth-pearls; oh, drink!
Hasten! The lovely, the lofty, the noble
Vainly you 'll seek if the soul of them sink.
Fool, if you fasten your eyes on the bubble,
Water is all you may quaff at the brink!

Take! They depart, the enravishing
Hours; then take!
All the most exquisite laughter and rapture
Rise and subside while the moment 's at stake.
Joy in the midst of its flight you must capture;
Rockets when highest the soonest will break.

Soon from the earth flies enspiriting
Pleasure, ah soon!
Caught by the youth in his keen expectation
Out of the grape as a delicate boon,
Then from the rose-mouth that buds with elation
Straightway 't is off to its home o'er the moon.

Johan Olof Wallin, 1779–1839

FROM "THE ANGEL OF DEATH"

I AM the Strong One, and I have power
Till comes a stronger to break my will.
In deepest clefts or where mountains tower
Ye feel my breath in the blasts that chill.
The pest that harrows
And cleanses nations,
And Night's dread arrows
Do ministrations
For me; resistless their blows they deal
Through wall of copper and targe of steel.

My wings on blasts of the storm are rushing,
I roll the loud wave against the strand.
All states, all empires abide my crushing,
I wrest the bolt from the thunder's hand.
While I, pursuing,
Hunt down the ages,
The sea of doing
Beneath me rages.
Man's works are shattered before my feet
Till roaring billows no more shall beat.

Nor wit nor weapon can long oppose me,
No art, no learning withstands my might.

To thralls as freedom I may disclose me,
But armèd kings on their thrones I smite.
I call to battle,
And armies fall then,
Like slaughtered cattle
They perish all then;
No drum shall rouse them from dreams profound
Until the Trumpet of Doom shall sound.

My hand but waves, and the living legions
Are swept from earth unto chaos, where
No name is heard in the lonely regions
And not a tongue can make answer there.
As forth I wander,
All thrones are crumbled,
See Alexander,
Napoleon humbled!
The victor monarchs of yore to-day
Are but a handful of common clay.

Esaias Tegnér, 1782–1846

BIRDS OF PASSAGE

So hot shines the sun on the Nile's fertile shore,
The shade of the palms can protect us no more.
Then back to our home-land we fain would set forth,
Our squadrons assemble: "Away! to the north!"

And there far below like a grave to our view
We see the green earth and the ocean so blue,
Where storms and unrest never cease, but on high
As free as the clouds of the heavens we fly.

Far up mid the mountains a vale is outspread,
And there we alight and prepare us a bed.
Our eggs near the Pole then are laid every one,
And hatched in the light of the midnight sun.

No hunter may trouble the peace of our dale,
But gold-wingèd elves come to dance in that vale.
The green-mantled Wood Queen at eve wanders there,
And dwarfs' hammers ring from some deep mountain lair.

But winter soon stands on the summit once more
And flaps his white wings with a thunderous roar,
The hare's fur grows white too, the ash-berries glow,
Our squadrons assemble with: "South we must go!"

Then fields that are verdant, and waves that are hot,
And shade-giving palm-trees are dear to our thought.
We rest there awhile from our journey, and then
We long for our world in the northland again.

KISSES

You for every line I make
Promise me a kiss for wages;
Gladly, then, I fill the pages,
Less reward I often take.
Still we ought to make some measure,
I with lines, with kisses you.
Let me count: here's seven due,
Call it eight! The more my pleasure.

Eight's unlucky, worse than seven,
Nine of old the Grecian Muses,
One for Sweden ten excuses.
The Apostles were eleven,
Judas' name I do not reckon,
He who kissed so faithlessly;
Fear not such a kiss from me,
Least of all when fair lips beckon.

What's the tally, all this time?
Eighteen; some would think it plenty.
Nineteen—I must match the rhyme,
So perforce will make it twenty.

Well, the stanza's nigh complete,
And I steer me back to shore now,
Therefore be content, my sweet,
For the nonce with twenty-four now.

THE GIANT

I DWELL in mountain caverns,
Deep-hid from daylight,
Where never Odin's eye can
Pierce through the darkness.
I hate the white-skinned strangers,
The sons of Askur,
Who bow the knee to gods that
My heart despises.

My joy it is to ride on
The storm at midnight.
I trample down the harvest,
The ships I shatter.
I lead astray the wand'rer
Who seeks his cabin,
And I exult to see him
Quake at my laughter.

But I can bear the day too,
Though ne'er so dazzling,
If the Valkyries wave their
Blood-stained pinions.

How fine! when bow-sped swallows
Flit o'er the army,
And broadswords chill full many
A heart hot-beating.

"What wouldst thou with innocence,
Daughter of Embla?"
See! in the troll's embraces
The bloom is withered.
"Why shouldst thou fight for country,
O youthful Norseman?"
He sold his father's grave for
A golden pittance.

A sage sat in a valley
And spoke such wisdom
As Odin might have heard from
The head of Mimer.
I flung a mist around him
As there he pondered.
How fine! The fool denies now
The great All-Father.

I hate the dreams of poets,
Those Valhall fancies
Of fatherland and honor,
Of gods and virtue.
I can't entice the fool in
His cloudland roaming;

Yet there's no need: on earth he
Is disregarded.

Thor comes now with his hammer,
I smile to see him;
I set a mountain peak on
My head for helmet.
Let heroes come to fight me,
Let shine the sunlight!
For Evil is immortal
Even as Good is.

THE ETERNAL

The strong man awhile in his kingdom is lord,
Like eagles his glory is flying;
But broken at last is the conquering sword,
And the eagles in dust will be lying.
What Might has created is short-lived and vain:
Like winds of the desert it passes again.

But Truth lives forever. Though weapons be whirled,
Her brow shines undimmed o'er the pother.
'Tis she that leads on through the night of this world
And points us the way to another.
The True is eternal: from heaven to earth
With each generation the word echoes forth.

The Right is eternal: though trod in the dust,
Yet never her lily shall perish.
Though Evil have won all the world from the just,
Your will yet availeth to cherish.
Though Force and Deceit all without may have reft,
Yet hid in your bosom a stronghold is left.

The fiery will which was barred from its choice
Takes form, like to God, and is action.
The Right finds a weapon, the True finds a voice,
Men rise up in bold insurrection.
The gifts you have brought and the dangers you've run
Arise out of Lethe like stars, every one.

And Poetry's not as a bow in the sky,
Or volatile perfume of flowers.
The beauty you make is not dust that shall die,
The ages but quicken its powers.
Eternal is Beauty, its metal sublime
We ardently seek in the waters of Time.

Then seize on all Truth, venture all for the Right,
Make Beauty with joy for your wages!
These three from humanity never take flight,
With them we appeal to the ages.
Whatever Time gave, unto Time you must pay,
The Eternal alone dwells within you for aye.

SONG TO THE SUN

I WILL sing unto thee,
O thou radiant sun,
High aloft on thy throne
In the deep, azure night,
With the worlds left and right
As thy vassals. Below
In thy glance they may glow;
But their light thou must be.

Behold! Nature is dead.
Now, when ghosts walk about,
On her form night has cast
A black mort-cloth at last.
Many lamps lend relief
To the mansion of grief.
Thou again steppest out
When the east burneth red.
Like a rosebud unfurled
Now awakens the world.
It takes life, it takes hue,
But with joy thou look'st down
On the glittering dew,
And the hills' flaming crown.
And Life's flowing stream,
That was stilled in a dream,
Now goes murmuring on
With thine image, O sun,

Till, more cool, thy rays fall
On the great western hall,
Where fulfilled is each hope
And where virtue may rest
When the portals shall ope
To the realm of the blest.

O celestial one, say
Whence thou camest, I pray.
Wert thou by at the time
The Almighty sublime
Sowed the glittering night
With the seed of the light?
Or perchance was thy place
By the throne of the Lord—
Far aloft above Space—
Where the angels adored;
Till no more thou wouldst brook
The commands from on high,
And He wrathfully took
Thee and flung through the sky
With supernal disdain
Like a ball in the blue
Which might show to full view
That He only doth reign?
Therefore on thou dost roll
With so restless a will
That no friend may console
Thee or bid thee be still.

And anon thou dost seek
With a cloud to enfurl
The hot shame of thy cheek,
For thou ruest the day
The Avenger did hurl
From His presence away,
And thou fell'st from His knees
To the sky's desert seas.

Seems it long thou hast strode
On thy journey alone?
Dost thou tire of the road
Thou so often hast gone?
As in ages untold
Thou hast come the same way,
Have thy tresses of gold
Never softened to gray?
Thou'rt a warrior strong
In the radiant strath,
And thy bold legions throng,
Over-arching thy path.
But the hour draws near
When thy great yellow sphere
With a loud noise will break,
And Creation shall quake.
Like a tottering wall
Will the universe fall
Into atoms with thee;
And Time, that on high

Like an eagle sped free,
Shall fall, wounded, and die.
Now an angel doth soar,
Where thou swammest of yore
Like a swan gold of hue
On the ocean of blue;
He looks dumbly around
On the empty Profound,
But he sees thee not there.
For, thy long trial o'er,
The Almighty thee bore
On His arm like a child,
And received thee to rest
On His fatherly breast.

Do thou roll on thy way
And be glad in the light
Till thou reachest that day!
We shall win through the night,
Be it never so long,
And in fairer blue then
I shall hail thee again
With a lovelier song.

FAREWELL TO MY LYRE

Farewell, my lyre! for now the course is run.
Lay thee to sleep; our singing-time is done.
Before thy tones my sorrow often fled

As Saul's of old. The echoes of them sped
Through many a good, yea, far more worthy breast.
I'm done with thee. Be still, and take thy rest!

"Svea" I once did sing and "Frithiof's Lay,"
To Nature, Man, and God mine anthems rang:
In sober truth I lived but when I sang.
From north to south the winds did shift and sway,
My poor heart had from thorns full many a pang,
But many a rose would charm the pain away.
I scarce can tell — my days have seemed so brief —
If I had more of joy or more of grief.

Thou wert my weapon, naught but thee I carried.
Thou wert my shield, none other could I get.
We went upon adventures, never tarried,
We once would conquer everything we met.
But at the grave the scutcheon must be shattered;
God bids me now depart, my race is dead or scattered.

Thou Poetry, where erst my soul did dwell,
Spirit of heaven, farewell, a long farewell!
I must go hence, my days will be but few.
Thou wert my everything: the Good, the True.
I loved thee before all and over all;
From heaven thou dost beckon me and call.

The day shall dawn when, from my ashes rising,
A bard shall come to sing with bolder might

A strain more lofty than my best devising,
A song I dreamed not ere my strength took flight,
Of all that 's noble in our Northland story,
Of all the might that still is Sweden's glory.

Farewell! I end where I began with thee,
O Song, my only true Reality,
Life of my life, the undying spark within me;
I part, though to the parting scarce I win me.
Brothers, the time 's not yet, but on some day
We 'll part no more, have no farewells to say.—
But now, farewell! The parting 's not for long.
Wither, ye laurels, round my temples gray,
Die on my lips, O thou, my final song!

Erik Gustaf Geijer, 1783–1847

THE CHARCOAL-BURNER'S SON

My father he 's at the kiln away,
My mother sits at her spinning;
But wait, I 'll too be a man some day,
And a sweetheart I 'll then be winning.
So dark it is far off in the forest.

At dawn I am up and off with the sun—
Hurrah! when the sun 's a-shimmer.
To father then with his food I run;
Soon follows the twilight's glimmer.
So dark it is far off in the forest.

I roam the green foot-path fearlessly
As I haste through the woods alone there.
But darkly the pines look down on me,
And long mountain shadows are thrown there.
So dark it is far off in the forest.

Tralala! As glad as a bird in flight
I 'll sing as the path I follow.
But harsh the reply from the mountain height,
And the woods are heavy and hollow.
So dark it is far off in the forest.

If I were but with my old father, though!
Hark! the bear is growling with hunger.
And the bear is the mightiest fellow, I know,
And spares neither older nor younger.
So dark it is far off in the forest.

The shadows come down so thick, so thick,
As if curtains were drawn together.
There 's rustle and rattle of stone and stick,
And trolls are walking the heather.
So dark it is far off in the forest.

There 's one! There are two! In their net they'll take
Me, alas!—how the firs are waving.
They beckon. O God, do not Thou forsake!
By flight my life I 'd be saving.
So dark it is far off in the forest.

. . .

The hours went by, the daylight was gone,
The way it grew ever more wild now,
There 's whisp'ring and rustling o'er stick and o'er stone
As over the heath runs the child now.
So dark it is far off in the forest.

With rosy-red cheek and heart beating fast
To his father's kiln swiftly fleeing,
He fell. "My dear son, oh, welcome at last!"
"'T is trolls, aye and worse I 've been seeing.
So dark it is far off in the forest."

"My son, it is long here I 've had to dwell,
But God has preserved me from evil.
Whoever knows his Our Father well
Fears neither for troll nor for devil,
Though dark it is far off in the forest."

A MARCH

NOVEMBER SIXTH, 1832

O FATHERLAND, whose memory
Inspires the youthful heart to praise,
May in our hearts the virtues be
That made thee great in former days.
Too long the grave reminds in vain
Of what thou canst not be again.
Rely not only on the past,
But speak within the young man's breast!
Our fathers bid us by their story
To live as they, and die in glory.

MUSIC

THOUGHT, whose hard strife only midnight may see,
Prayeth, O Music, to rest him with thee.
Feeling, oppressed by the day's garish light,
Turneth, O Music, to thee in her flight.

MIGNONETTE

Flower in the forest hidden,
Thou that dwellest all unknown,
Thee I sing, that here unbidden
Comest from a kindlier zone.

Where no light thy petal staineth
To a tint of blue or gold,
In the grass thy head remaineth,
Rivalling not thy sisters bold.

Sunbeam may caress thee never,
Yet a sacred fire is thine,
And unseen there bloometh ever
In thy soul a flower divine.

Life, ah! what is life but sadness?
Sweetly thou dost breathe thy prayer.
Be thou glad! To give out gladness
More avails than to be fair.

Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom, 1790–1855

FELICIA'S SONG

Which is the lovelier scene,
Which the more sweet of the two:
Earth so enchantingly green?
Heaven enchantingly blue?

While in a choosing despair
Upward, then downward I glance,
Who could select as more fair
Earth now or heaven's expanse?

Larks trilling up in the skies
Call me to share in their rest.
Roses that fetter mine eyes
Offer their sod for my nest.

Soaring, with anthems to go
Up where the gods dwell on high—
Dreaming mid flowers below,
Which were the better to try?

Lark-like and rose-like in birth,
Soul, thou to both must belong!
Soul, between heaven and earth
Scatter thou perfume and song!

CHORUS OF THE WINDS

Up through the air, over land, over ocean,
Swift let the storm of our legions be hurled!
Morn's rosy wand with imperious motion
Beckons us forth to the wakening world.
Onward, to play in
The billows that rove!
Onward, to sway in
The murmuring grove!
Beast and dull man may but hark to the roaring
Sound of our wings from some stifling den.
We, to the firmament freely upsoaring,
Come back to earth with our tidings again.

Erik Johan Stagnelius, 1793–1823

THE NIXIE

WREATHS of golden cloud are glancing,
Elves upon the lea are dancing,
While the sedge-crowned nixie ever
Plays his fiddle from the river.

But a lad in clumps of willow,
Hearing music from the billow,
Calls o'er violet-perfumed meadows
Through the silent evening shadows:

"Poor old boy, how can you play so?
Can you make your sad heart gay so?
Though you cheer all else in nature,
You can never be God's creature.

"Heaven's beauteous moonlit bowers,
Eden crowned with blooming flowers,
Angels bright with hues elysian,—
These will never bless your vision."

Tears flow down the nixie's face then,
And he sinks to his own place then.
Silent is the fiddle. Never
Sounds the music from the river.

Karl Jonas Love Almqvist, 1793–1866

A WITCH OF KING CHARLES'S TIME

HERE on the mountain lie the carlin's blackened bones,
Hers whom aforetime they burned here on a pyre.
Now shall you hear the tale of that red flame,
Hear why they brought the woman there and burned her.
The old woman took white slivers of a pine board,
Stuck then the slivers deep into a wall.
Softly she went to the wall and with trembling hands drew
milk for her little child;
But from the rich priest's cow the milk was taken.
They stood the child beside the mother's pyre.

THE HEART'S FLOWER

THERE is a flower that hath no hue,
In the home of the heart doth it grow.
'T is God in heaven hath wrought that flower,
Thou must know.
The flower hath still no hue as yet
In the home of the heart where it grows,
But God hath given to it the name
Of Brier-Rose.
The thorns of the rose are wounding the heart,
And blood the blossom dyes.
The heart then asks of the Lord:

"Why didst thou give me the rose?"
And gently the Lord replies:
"Blood of thy heart stained the rose for thee;
Thou and thy rose are alike now in beauty to me."

Johan Ludvig Runeberg, 1804–1877

SVEN DUVA

His father, once a sergeant, was poor and old and gray,
For he had fought in 'eighty-eight, was old then, you might say.
And now he farmed a bit of ground his daily bread to gain
And had around him children nine, the youngest one was Sven.

That old man Duva had himself enough of brains to share
Among a brood as large as his, one hardly could declare.
He surely gave the elder ones too much of his small wit,
For to the son that last was born was left the tiniest bit.

Sven Duva grew up just the same, was strong and broad of chest,
Toiled like a slave in field or wood with unremitting zest,
Was willing, gay, and kind of heart, far more than clever folk,
Would turn his hand to anything, but was in all a joke.

"In gracious heaven's name, poor son, what can you ever be?"
The old man often said to him in sad perplexity.
But when such talk would never end, Sven Duva's patience failed,
At last he set his head to work for all that it availed.

So one fine day it chanced when Sergeant Duva cooed again
The old unanswered song: "What will become of you, my Sven?"
The old man started backward in astonishment, because
"I 'll be a soldier," said the son, and spread his uncouth jaws.

The aged sergeant smiled a smile full of contemptuous doubt:
"You rascal, take a gun and be a soldier? Oh, get out!"
"Well," said the lad, "I make a botch of all I take in hand;
Perhaps I 'll find it easier to die for king and land."

Old Duva was surprised and touched, a tear rolled down his face;
And Sven — he shouldered knapsack for the first recruiting-place.
Full-size they found him, brisk and strong; 't was all they asked, and he
Became forthwith a raw recruit in Duncker's company.

And now came Duva's time to drill and go through exercise,
To watch him was a wondrous sight; he drilled in curious wise.
The corporal might shout and laugh, might laugh and shout his best,
The new recruit went on alike for earnest or for jest.

When all the rest were tired out, he never seemed to fret.
He tramped until the ground would quake, and marched till all a-sweat;
But when the order came to turn, 't was his unhappy lot,
To face to right or face to left, whichever he should not.

Then he was taught to "shoulder arms," and taught to "ground arms," too,
"Present arms," "level bayonets,"—all these they thought he knew;
When "Shoulder arms!" was called, he 'd "level bayonets" maybe,
At "Ground arms!" up his gun went to his shoulder instantly.

So finally Sven Duva's drill grew famous far and wide,
The officers and soldiers came and laughed until they cried;
But still he kept on patiently, untroubled by a doubt,
And waited for a better time—'t was then the war broke out.

When orders were to break up camp, the question had to come,
Had Duva wit enough to fight or should he stay at home.
He listened calmly to their plans, but soon proposed his own:
"If I can't go with all the rest, I 'll have to go alone."

They left him gun and knapsack then to do his own behest,
A soldier he when battle raged, a servant for the rest;
As fighting-man or serving-man, alike sedate and cool,
He never played the coward, though he sometimes played the fool.

One day with Sandels in retreat, the Russians on each flank,
Our troops were drawing slowly back along a river bank.
Right in the army's line of march a little foot-bridge spanned
The stream, and there an outpost stood, scarce twenty in the band.

Merely to mend the broken road this band was sent ahead,
Which done, far off from shot or blow, they rested free from dread.
They happened on a farmer's house and stripped the larder bare,
And Duva passed the victuals round, for he was with them there.

But on a sudden all was changed, for from the near-by steep
With foaming horse an adjutant came spurring leap on leap.
"Get to the bridge," he shouted, "lads, for God's sake, no delay!
We 've word a troop of enemy would cross and bar our way."

He bade the leader, "Get the bridge demolished if you can,
And if you can't, well, hold it then, and fight to the last man!
The army's lost if now the foe should take us in the rear.
Sandels will come to your support, he'll soon himself be here."

He galloped off. But scarce the band had gotten to the bridge
Before platoons of Russians rose above the farther ridge.
They opened ranks, closed up, took aim and fired. At the sound
Of their first volley eight bold Finns went reeling to the ground.

The rest shrank back: why tarry there when nothing could be gained?
Another crash of musketry, and but five Finns remained.
They all obeyed the sergeant's call, "Trail arms!" and then, "Retreat!"
Only Sven Duva got it wrong and levelled bayonet.

Still worse, the order to retreat got twisted in his head,
And, far from facing right about, down to the bridge he sped.
He stood there firm with shoulders squared, quite calm and easy still,
Ready to show to all that came how well he knew his drill.

They did n't give him long to wait, for ere he took his stand,
Behold! upon the little bridge there thronged a hostile band.
Man after man they rushed across, but each as he came on
Got face-to-right or face-to-left, fell over, and was gone.

No human arm was strong enough to make that giant yield,
And when the rear ranks tried to shoot, the front ranks were his shield.
The fiercer was the foe, the more his hope would come to naught,
When up came Sandels with his men and saw how Duva fought.

"Bravo!" he shouted, "fine; keep on, you splendid fellow, you!
Throw every devil off the bridge, hold on, for God's sake, do!
That 's how a Finn should fight, ay, that 's a soldier you may say.
Come on, boys, hurry to his help! for he has saved the day!"

The enemy soon found themselves checkmated in the game;
The Russians, turning right about, retreated whence they came.

When all was quiet, Sandels left his horse and went to see
The soldier who stood on the bridge and fought so gallantly.

They pointed out Sven Duva then. His battle-lust was gone,
For he had fought there like a man, and now the strife was done.
It seemed as though in weariness he rested after play,
No longer bold and confident, but very pale he lay.

Then Sandels bent him down above that face so white of hue;
No unfamiliar man was that, but one whom all men knew.
But Sandels saw that underneath his heart the grass was red,
His breast was pierced, and through the wound his life by now had sped.

These were the words the general spake: "We 'll all of us admit
That bullet knew far more than we, it knew the place to hit;
It left unhurt the poor lad's head, which was not of the best,
And found itself a worthier mark, his noble, valiant breast."

And afterwards whenever men would tell about the fight,
They each and every one agreed that Sandels' words were right.
"It 's true," they used to say, "his mind did less than most men's could,
A sorry head Sven Duva had, his heart, though, that was good."

THE GIRL OF THE COTTAGE

The sun went down — 't was summer time — from evening skies out-welling
A pallid purple glow was shed on farm and farmer's dwelling.
Weary with toil, but happy, came a troop of peasant men;
Now that the day's hard task was done, they turned them home again.

Their task was done, a worthy task for brave and loyal yeomen;
Their harvest was a daring band of felled or captured foemen.
They had gone forth to meet their foes that day by morning light,
And evening had already come when they had won the fight.

Hard by the field where waves of strife had flooded and reverted
Lay a small cottage near the road, at that time half deserted.
On the low door-step sat a girl who silently would cast
Her glance on the returning troops as they were marching past.

She looked as one who sought. Who knows to what her mind was turning?
A hue more deep than sunset gave upon her cheek was burning.
She sat so still, her searching look so warmly would entreat,
That, if she listened as she looked, she heard her own heart beat.

But ever as they went their way she watched the troops advancing,
From line to line, from man to man, her eager eyes were glancing;
There was a question in her look that trembled unexpressed,
For she was stiller than the sigh that stole from her full breast.

But in the end when all had passed with never once a token,
The poor girl's calm held out no more, her fortitude was broken;

Not loud she wept, but on her palm she slowly bowed her head,
And soon great tears came rolling down and bathed her cheek so red.

"Why do you weep? Take heart again, for hope is left us plainly.
My daughter, hear your mother's voice,—your tears are flowing vainly.
Although just here and now your eyes could find not him they sought,
Yet still he lives, and therefore lives because on you he thought.

"He thought of you, for when he left, he left with right good warning;
I bade him take no heedless risk, as he went off this morning.
He went because he had to go, he thought not of the fray,
I know he had no will to die and throw life's joy away."

The girl looked up and trembled there, from dreams of sorrow waking.
Moved by foreboding, as it seemed, her heart's mute woe forsaking,
She straightway rose, she looked but once across the field of fight,
Stole to the road, then softly fled, and disappeared from sight.

An hour had passed, another hour, and night the earth had covered,
And over dusky wood and field a silver cloudlet hovered.
"She tarries yet.—My daughter, come, in vain is all your fear,
To-morrow while the dawn is gray your bridegroom will be here."

At last she came. With silent step she neared the mother slowly,
Her gentle eyes were filled alone with tearless melancholy,
Her hand stretched out in greeting was as chill as the night air,
And her cold cheek was whiter than the cloud above her there.

"Oh, make my grave, my mother dear, for short will be my life now,
Since he who won my faith and troth has basely fled the strife now.
He thought of me and of himself, he followed as you planned,
And he betrayed his brothers' hope, betrayed his fatherland.

"When others came and he came not, I wept his fate most truly,
Among the dead there on the field I thought him lying duly;

I sorrowed, but my grief was sweet, 't was not a grief to kill,
I would have lived a thousand years to sorrow for him still.

"Mother, I sought until the light no more the west was streaking,
None of the fallen had the face beloved which I was seeking.
I 'll dwell no longer in a world where men deceive and lie;
I found not him among the dead, and therefore I will die."

OUR LAND

Our land, our land, our native land,
Ring high, O word of cheer!
No hills by heaven's rim that stand,
No gentle dales or foaming strand,
Are loved more than our northland here,
The earth our sires held dear.

Our land is poor, or seems to be
To him who covets gold;
A stranger might not deign to see
The land we love so faithfully,
But gold to us its mountains bold,
Its wealth of moor and wold.

We love our brooks that gaily bound,
Our rushing rivers fleet,
The gloomy forest's mournful sound,

The summer glow, the nights profound,—
All, all that eye or ear can greet,
Or make our glad hearts beat.

'T was here of old our fathers fought
With brain, and sword, and plough;
In clear or cloudy days they wrought,
Whatever fate their fortune brought
The Finn-folk suffered — none knows how —
And won what we have now.

Oh, who could tell the fearful tale
Of what that folk withstood,
Their hunger in the wintry gale
When war ran red from dale to dale? —
Who reckon all the heroes' blood
And all their hardihood?

'T was here they shed that crimson tide,
Yea, here for us it flowed,
'T was here they thrilled with victor pride
'T was here in bitter grief they sighed,
The folk that bore our heavy load
Before our day had showed.

To us there is no fairer spot,
We suffer here no dearth;
However fate may cast our lot,

A land, a native land we 've got.
What better could men ask on earth
To love and hold of worth?

And here before us lies that land,
Our eyes behold it here;
And we can raise our outstretched hand,
And gladly point to sea and strand
And say: "Behold it, far and near,
Our native land so dear!"

If we were borne to realms of light,
All golden in the blue,
And were our life a star-dance bright
Which neither sigh nor tear should blight,
To this poor land where first we grew
Our longing would be true.

O land of myriad lakes, thou land
Where song and truth may be,
Where life's rude ocean spares a strand,
Our fathers' land, our children's land,
Be not ashamed of poverty,
Be glad, secure, and free!

The flowers in their buds that grope
Shall burst their sheaths with spring;
So from our love to bloom shall ope

Thy gleam, thy glow, thy joy, thy hope,
And higher yet some day shall ring
The patriot-song we sing!

TROUBLE NOT THE MAIDEN'S SOUL

On the bank the maiden sat,
Bathed her feet there in the brook,
When a bird above her sang:
"Maiden, trouble not the brook!
Heaven is no more mirrored there."
Then the maiden raised her glance
And with weeping eyes she said:
"Do not sorrow for the brook,
Soon the brook will clear again.
When you saw me on a day
Standing here beside a youth,
Unto him you should have said:
'Trouble not the maiden's soul,
For it never will be clear,
Never mirror heaven again.'"

TEARS

When o'er the crested wood the sun, uprising,
Had made the valley dew-drops gleam, a maiden
With tears of joy went forth to meet her lover,
Who, looking in her eyes, addressed her, smiling:
"You wept at my departure, now returning

I once again behold you weep. Kind maiden,
What is the difference in these tears, pray tell me?"
"Just the same difference," the girl said softly,
"As between evening dew and dew of morning:
One kind the sun lights up and then disperses,
The other bides in darkness all the night long."

FROM "IDYLLS AND EPIGRAMS"

I

From a lover's trysting came the maiden,
With red hands she came. Her mother asked her:
"Wherefore are your hands so red, my daughter?"
And the girl said, "I've been plucking roses,
And the thorns have pricked me as I plucked them."
From her love-tryst came once more the maiden,
With red lips she came. Her mother asked her:
"Wherefore are your lips so red, my daughter?"
And the girl said, "Raspberries I've eaten,
And they stained my lips as I was eating."
From her love-tryst once again the maiden
Came, with pallid cheek. Her mother asked her:
"Wherefore is your cheek so pale, my daughter?"
But the girl said, "Make my grave, O mother,
Hide me there and set a cross above me,
Carve upon the cross what I shall tell you:
"Red her hands were at the first returning,
'T was within a lover's hands they reddened.
Red her lips were at the next returning,

'T was beneath a lover's lips they reddened.
Pale her lips were at the last returning,
They were pale because her love was faithless."

II

Spring's first flowers are the first to wither,
And the brook's first bubbles first are broken:
But thy heart's first love, O youthful bosom,
Far outlives whatever loves may follow.

X

In the park a pair of finches nested.
Through the spring the male was ever singing,
Through the summer oft he would be silent,
And when autumn came he ceased completely.
Why?—Because as long as springtime lasted
He had naught to think of but his sweetheart;
But with summer vexing cares drew nigh him,
Worries for his home and tender offspring;
And when autumn came and days grew chilly
Forth toward other climes went all his longing.

XIII

Over the fence the lad
Leaned by the girl he loved,
Looked on the wasted field:
"Summer has fled away,
Flowers are withered now;
But still your cheek is bright,
Roses and lilies there

Blossom as formerly."
Spring came once more, and then
Lonely the lover stood:
Gone was the girl — she lay
Withered in earth's embrace;
Green was the field again,
Smiling and blossom-clad.

XVI

Counsels three the mother gave her daughter:
Not to sigh, not to be discontented,
Not to give a kiss to any lover.
Mother, if your daughter disobey not
In the last of these three things you counsel,
She will disobey in both the others.

XVII

On the Even of St. John the maiden
Winds on three green wheat-stalks nigh to budding
Silken threads, each of a different color;
Then she goes upon the morn thereafter
To the place to know her future fortune.

Well and good. But hearken how she does it:
If the black, the stalk of grief, has budded,
She will tell, and share her grief with others.
If the red, the stalk of joy, has budded,
She will tell, and share her joy with others.
If the green, the stalk of love, has budded,
She will hide her joy within her bosom.

MORNING

Now the sun begins to sprinkle
Eastern clouds with purple hue,
And on bush and grass-blade twinkle
Pearly showers of dripping dew.

All the woodland birds are winging
Jubilant from spray to spray,
Myriad songs of joy upspringing
Ere the last have died away.

Inlets ripple, waves are bending,
Groves are stirred by gentle flaws,
Leaf and flower perfumes blending
With each breath the bosom draws.

Angel, friend of every being,
You that dwell in yon far skies,
Dawn,—what man with power of seeing
Looks on you with sullen eyes?

Fled the mists of care that lower,
Gone the clouds from every brow,
Day in this his childhood hour
Loves but childlike feelings now.

Not one sad or mournful creature,
Joy and hope in all have part,
With the wakening morn of nature
Morning wakes in every heart.

THE SWAN

From out a bright cloud's purple band
A swan, one eve in June,
Sank softly to a river strand
And sang a gladsome tune.

All of the Northland was his song,
Of how the sky is fair,
How day forgets the whole night long
And never slumbers there.

How shadows there are rich and bold
'Neath birch and alder brave,
How every bay is touched with gold,
And cool is every wave.

How sweet, how sweet beyond compare
To have a friend there too,
How faith would ever sojourn there,
To its own birthplace true.

And so from wave to wavelet's crest
His song of praise would stray,
Until upon his true-love's breast
He leaned, as if to say:

Though of your life's too fleeting dream
No future age may sing,
You loved beside a northern stream,
You sang there in the spring.

THOUGHT

THOUGHT, behold yon bird there swinging
On his journey, free and light.
You have pinions too for winging
Toward a realm divinely bright.

Grieve not, though you seem a captured
Earth-bound prisoner, sad and loth.
Swift as light or bird, enraptured,
You may fly more free than both.

If the earth delight you, tarry
Mid its pleasures for a time;
If it irk you, hurry, hurry
Unto regions more sublime.

BESIDE A SPRING

O SPRING, upon your bank I lean
And watch the clouds that drift,
As, guided by a hand unseen,
Within your wave they shift.

There comes a cloud, it smiles as red
As budding roses might;
A short farewell, and it is fled
With unreturning flight.

Yet here 's another, still more fair
And radiant than the last!
But, no less transient, through the air
It hurries and has passed.

Another! This one hastes not though,
It plods along the blue;
But cold it is and dark, and lo!
My spring, it darkens you.

Then as I look, my fancies roam,
Till on my soul they dwell;
How many a golden cloud has come
And bidden it farewell,—

How many a gloomy cloud has sent
Deep night across its day,
They came so quickly, ah! but went
So slowly thence away.

Right well I understand the lore
Of how their shadows roll;
They are but thin clouds passing o'er
The mirror of my soul.

The mirror's hue must needs depend
On yonder clouds' behest,
O spring, when will your bubblings end,
When will your waves have rest?

THE SOLDIER BOY

My father was a soldier young, the finest you might see;
Took arms at fifteen, in two years he came to man's degree.
The field of honor he could hold,
He kept his station, gay and bold,
In blood, in fire, in hunger, cold,—
Ay, such a man was he.

I was a boy when peace was broke and he went forth to fight,
But still I mind his splendid stride, I mind him day and night;
His hat, his plume, his sunburnt hue,
The shadow of his eyebrows too,
His gallant form, so grand to view,
Will never leave my sight.

Then from our army in the north right soon were tidings brought
How fearless and how strong he was, how in each fight he fought.
He had a medal now to wear,
By next report he had a pair:
Ah me, how glorious to be there!
Within my heart I thought.

The winter passed, the snow was gone, the spring was blithe and brave,
When came the news: "Your father's dead, his life he nobly gave."

Just how I felt I hardly ken,
Was now distressed, now glad again;
But mother wept three days, and then
Was carried to her grave.

Close to the banner he was killed that day on Lappo plain,
They said he never blenched in fight but there when he was slain.
At Uttismalm, for Gustav's land,
My grandsire died with sword in hand,
His father fell at Willmanstrand,
That was in Charles's reign.

'T was so it went, 't was so they bled, their course was clear and straight;
How glorious in their life they lived, and in their death how great!
Oh, who would plod on sluggishly?
Nay, hot with youth in battle-glee
Die for your king and country, see
How manlier such a fate!

I 'm but a beggar boy myself, who eats of others' bread,
I 've neither home nor shelter now, with both my parents dead;
But I 've no wish to go and cry,
For taller every day am I,
To be a soldier boy I try,
And have no care or dread.

And if I live till I am big and reach fifteen some day,
To that same hunger, war, and death I'll go without dismay.
When whizzing bullets fill the air,
Whoever seeks may find me there,
For I in turn would follow where
My fathers led the way.

LAUGHTER

Laughter without a home
Wandering mournfully,
Came to a great man's lips:
"May I have lodging here?"—
"This is the home of Pride."

Laughter without a home
Wandering mournfully,
Came to a scholar's lips:
"May I have lodging here?"—
"Here dwelleth Gravity."

Laughter without a home
Wandering mournfully,
Came to my sweetheart's lips:
"May I have lodging here?"—
"This is the home of Love,
Just now a kiss has come,
'T was you we waited for."

Elias Sehlstedt, 1808–1874

THE SNOW-SPARROW

Come in, come in, you little sparrow, tapping
My window-pane! You 'll break it soon, I vow.
How stupid! flying all around and flapping
When winter is as keen and cold as now.

There at the window-frame you 're pecking vainly:
Come in, come in! The evening fire I 've lit,
Fly round the corner and you 'll see quite plainly
I 've opened the piazza door a bit.

Dear me, what saucy manners! Well, I never!
Gently!—I 'm very frank; forgive me, pray.
Peeping at my thermometer? that 's clever!
Forgive, forgive me, please: it 's just my way.

Sing out if you are hungry and a vagrant;
You don't look very shy, I 'm bound to state.
Registered are you, or a beggar flagrant?
And, please, have you your birth certificate?

You 're freezing surely. Lord! you poor wee body,
In summer trousers at this time of year.
Well, may I offer you a glass of toddy?
Come in, come in! We 'll talk it over here.

Here at my poetry you see me sitting,
And you could help a little while I rhyme;
Then, I the words and you the music fitting,
We 'll do a little book for Christmas time.

Bernhard Elis Malmström, 1816–1865

THE SIGH OF THE FOREST

One chilly autumn evening when the day was nearly spent,
A little boy beneath a tree was playing.
He saw the candles burning in God the Father's tent
And heard the rustling linden-branches swaying.
All hushed he sat, his senses in dreams had taken flight,
While blacker grew the shadows that chill September night.
Then deeply in the dark sighed the forest.

The boy then stopped to listen, and awestruck was his mood,
He rose and ran to check the rising terror,
For ugly thoughts found entrance and stirred within his blood
Till round the heath he wandered all in error.
He thought of father, mother, of brothers, sisters dear:
"Oh, help me, God, I am so small. If only I were there!"
Then deeply in the dark sighed the forest.

The moon stepped softly out from the cloud-rack overhead,
O'er all the earth a silver mantle flinging;
And straightway to the mountains' foot the frightened shadows fled,
Back to their northern home the trolls were winging.

The mountain peaks were shining, but still the woods were dim,
And in the birches murmured a sad and eerie hymn.
Then deeply in the dark sighed the forest.

The little boy sped onward across the moorland wild,
With many an ancient tale his mind was haunted;
The stars pursued their courses, the heaven smiled and smiled,
But still he could not find the path he wanted.
"Ye gentle stars that travel so high upon your way,
Ye little withered flowers, oh, tell me, tell me, pray,
Who is it sighs so deep in the forest?"

But all the stars were silent, the little flowers too;
Oh, many bitter tears the boy was shedding,
Until he reached the elves' home. With wingèd steps he flew,
And cried, within their charmèd circle treading:
"Oh, ye who dance so nimbly along the heathery way,
Wee brothers and wee sisters, oh, tell me, tell me, pray,
Who is it sighs so deep in the forest?"

She smiled, the little elf-queen,—her lips were passing fair,—
And said, his ruddy cheek the while caressing:
"Don't cry, my pretty fellow, although you know not where
You 've come, and fear upon your heart is pressing.

Be seated on this hillock beside the heathery way,
And dry your eyes and listen to what I now shall say
Of that which sighs so deep in the forest.

"When Night begins his journey o'er land and shining sea,
And when the signs of day at length are vanished,
When waves have gone to rest them beneath some island's lee,
And pretty stars return that erst were banished,
Then, then the vault of heaven grows clear and mirror-bright,
A troop of blessed angels come down in silent flight
And shower on the earth their tears of silver.

"When poor Earth sees her image within the mirroring skies
And finds herself so dismally depicted,
And counts the sins: the murders, the vanities and lies
Wherewith these thousand years she's been afflicted,—
A deadly throe of horror strikes through her marrow there,
The mountains make confession, the valleys fall to prayer,
And deeply in the dark sighs the forest."

"Oh, thanks to thee, thou elf-queen! I'll not forget thy lore,
Nor fear as I go home across the heather.
Look! there within the moonlight I see my path once more;
Good-by, we 'll not forget this time together.

I've neither goods nor treasure, I'm as poor as poor can be,
But here I promise Heaven that not because of me
Shall come at dusk that sigh from the forest."

SOFTLY, MY HEART!

Softly, my heart! For you soon will repose,
Soon unto clay will be turning.
Wild was your beating, but weary it grows,
Now for green peace it is yearning.
Under the murmuring lindens deep
Soon shall you wait in your lonely sleep.

Faithful you've throbbed these many long years,
Sorrows and joys you have given,
Causing me laughter and causing me tears,
Causing my guilt before heaven.
But, if you sinned, you would ne'er shun the cost;
Glowing, remorseful, 't was you suffered most.

Frederik August Dahlgren, 1816–1895

THE SUN-PARASOL

Now Stina and Matts went to Stockholm, and he
Became an apprentice, a lady's-maid she.
But with her so deeply in love did he fall,
He gave her a thing called a sun-parasol.

Through all the long week but for Sunday he prayed,
When he could get rid of the stains of his trade,
And go for a fine promenade in the mall
To show off his sweet with her sun-parasol.

The Sundays came round just as sure as could be,
But never a sign of the sun could they see,
And Stina she thought it would not do at all
To take in dull weather a sun-parasol.

"I can't understand," said the girl, with a pout,
"Why this year the sun is ashamed to come out;
For into the clouds like an ogre he 'll crawl
When I should go out with my sun-parasol."

But Matts, who was truly a clever young beau,
Said, "You are so pretty and dazzling, you know,
That when you go out, 't is the sun most of all,
I 'm thinking, has need of a sun-parasol."

Gunnar Wennerberg, 1817–1901

HYMN

O God, Who guid'st the fate of nations,
Almighty over every land,
Both life and death and all mutations
Controlling with Thy mighty hand,
What punishment Thy will ordaineth
For sins that Sweden must atone
She bears with gladness, while remaineth
The ancient freedom she has known.
'T is this that shields when dangers lower,
That comforts her when griefs enfold,
That guards when foes would overpower
Better than Sveaborg of old.
Come want! come all you eastern slaves here!
Come faction, cast your firebrand!
'T is but that we may dig your graves here
By freedom's might on Svithiod's strand.

Karl Vilhelm August Strandberg, 1818–1877

SWEDISH NATIONAL HYMN

Let Swedish bosoms deep and strong
In simple and united song
Do honor to our king!
Be true to him and to his race,
Make light his crown and firm his place,
Your highest faith to do him grace,
O far-famed people, bring!

O king, thy people's majesty
Is but as thine; we look to thee
To guard it from the foe.
If all the world in battle came,
We should not fear the threat of shame,
But make a footstool for thy fame
Of enemies brought low.

But if should come our final day,
Then cast thy purple robe away,
Lift off thy burdening crown,
Bring the old flag and take command,
Beneath its blue and yellow stand:
Then go thou forth with sword in hand
To perish with renown!

Ah, hold that glorious banner fast,
Lead on thy people to the last

And boldly face the storm!
Thy faithful folk with hero-mood
Shall dye it in their dearest blood
A royal purple, warm and good,
To wrap thy royal form.

O God in heaven, evermore
Be with us as Thou wast of yore,
Inspire upon our strand
The ancient valor yet again
Of Swedish monarchs and their men,
Thy Spirit resting now as then
O'er all our northern land!

Zakarias Topelius, 1818–1898

MY MOTHER

WHERE is the love that, both soon and late,
Changeless till death in whatever fate,
Guards like an angel above us waking,
Asking for nothing, but all forsaking?
Go search the earth and you 'll find but one;
Such is a mother's deep love alone.

All bonds are selfish compared with this;
Even the rapturous bridegroom's kiss,
The joy a sister's embrace affords us,
Or childish arms that are stretching towards us.
Our truest friend some return has sought,
Only a mother has no such thought.

Does she recall through the long-past years
The bitter anguish, the streaming tears,
Her youthful spring that was gone so lightly,
Her days of care and her watchings nightly,
All for the child whom she loved the more,
The more distress for its joy she bore?

And who can give what her love imparts? —
The first-born thoughts of our childish hearts,
The first faint prayer that the young voice utters,
Our pure first love like a flame that flutters.

'T is by her prompting we understand
Truth, Virtue, Freedom, and Native Land.

And what do we give her throughout our lives? —
But grief, which tenderly she forgives;
A lukewarm love that is much divided,
A care that leaves her too oft unguided.
We bring no cheer as her life decays,
But leave her lone in her autumn days.

Yet in her thought she is with him still,
The wayward one who would roam at will,
And like a torch of angelic favor
Her prayers direct when our footsteps waver;
Her Christian faith on our life's long road
Can point the way to a sure abode.

Oh, may such mothers be ever blest!
In floods of sorrow how sweet to rest,
To find a comfort amid our striving,
And flee the turmoil of selfish living,
On such a bosom, secure from harm
Planted and cherished by kisses warm!

Reward, O Most High, as we never can!
Thy seed she sowed in the growing man,
Thy love it is, O Most High, none other
That 's mirrored clear in the eyes of a mother;
'T will ever be like the sun's last gleam
When those dear eyes shall have ceased to beam.

ROSE-MARIE

Lone in the wood she sang, the pretty Rose-Marie,
Came to the limpid brook, her picture there saw she;
Loosened her braided hair,
Smiled then as springtime fair.
Why art thou, brook, so glad, and all thy flowers so gay;
Why does the forest bright
Smile as with green delight,
Why is the sky so blue, why do I sing to-day?

Come, said the brook, oh, come, thou pretty Rose-Marie,
Come as the breezes come, that whisper light and free!
Sit here upon the strand,
Lean down and cool thy hand,
Loosen thy shoes and lay thy small blue garters by.
Rest on the birch's root,
Bathe there thy snow-white foot,
Lave thy red cheek. 'T is well. Now, hark to my reply!

This makes me feel so glad, thou pretty Rose-Marie:
I am thy mirror now, and so may look at thee.
Therefore in pure delight
Blooms all the wood and bright:
This day our Rose-Marie is turned of seventeen.
Heaven is blue to-day,
And thou dost sing so gay,
Ay! for a thief of hearts dwells in the forest green.

THE MILKY WAY

The lamps have been put out, and now the night is
hushed and clear,
And now do all the memories of vanished days appear,
And tender legends flit about like gleams amid the blue,
Until with sad and wondrous joy the heart is kindled
too.

The limpid stars look downward in the winter midnight's
glow
With blissful smile, as if no death were known on Earth
below.
Can you discern their silent speech?—I 'll tell you, if
I may,
A tale the stars once told to me about the Milky Way.

. . .

Long since, upon a star dwelt he when all the heavens
were bright,
While she dwelt on another orb in distant realms of
night.
The name of her was Salami, and Zulamith hight he,
And each loved other with the love of spirits pure and
free.

The two had dwelt before on earth and loved each other
there,
But had been parted by the might of Sin and Death and
Care.

Though shining wings were given them when death's
repose was past,
Yet they were doomed to dwell on stars far-sundered in
the Vast.

They thought of one another still in their blue homes on
high,
While measureless between them lay a glowing gulf of
sky.
'Twixt Salami and Zulamith unnumbered worlds were
spread,
The flaming masterwork of Him whose hand hath all
things made.

Then Zulamith, whose heart was nigh consumed with
vain desire,
Began to build a bridge of light across the worlds of fire.
And even as did Zulamith, so she from her star's rim
Began to build from pole to pole a bridge of light to
him.

So for a thousand years they built with faith that naught
could stay
Until their starry bridge was done, the radiant Milky
Way,
Which spans the highest vault of heaven above the Zo-
diac's place,
And binds together shore with shore across the sea of
Space.

Then terror seized the cherubim, and God in haste they sought:
"Behold, O Lord, what Salami and Zulamith have wrought!"
But God Almighty smiled, and all was bright with beams of joy:
"What love hath wrought within my realm, I never will destroy."

And Salami and Zulamith, their bridge completed quite,
Ran straight into each other's arms—and then an orb of light,
The fairest in the vault of heaven, appeared where they had passed;
After a thousand years of grief a heart had bloomed at last.

So all who on this darksome earth have loved with tender heart,
Whom Sin and Sorrow, Death and Night, have ever kept apart,
May build a bridge from world to world, in regions of the blest,
May come unto the loved one's side, and there at length find rest.

LITTLE MAIA

MAMMA, as I went out to-day
To school, my pockets laden
With nuts, I met upon the way
A dainty little maiden.
She looked as sweet as when you bake
A little twist of raisin-cake.

She had anemones in her hair,
A nosegay on her bosom.
She skipped along on tiptoe there,
Her basket all a-blossom.
And as she went, yet more and more
Fell out the flowers that she bore.

She said: "Oh, come and play with me
In yonder blooming alley!
The lark is warbling there for thee,
The brook sings in the valley."
I said: "Not now; it would be wrong,
Because my lessons are so long."

I asked her: "What 's your name?" She said,
"Just Maia; I 've no other."
"Who 's your mamma, a lady bred?"
"A jackdaw is my mother."
"Who 's your papa?" "The west wind he."
"Your sister?" "Rose-on-Cheek is she."

I asked then: "Are you poor?" "How so?
The sun is my grandfather."
"And do you go to school?" "Oh, no.
I pick the flowers rather."
"Where do you live?" "On all the earth."
"Where do you go?" "To the frozen north."

She gave a nod and went her way
With eyes that shone so brightly.
I went to school.—Who is she, pray?
Oh, can you tell me rightly?
I've puzzled all day long on it,
And lessons will not go a bit.

I'll burst, my head's in such a stir,
My thoughts are so unruly.
But, mother, think if Maia were
The maid of springtime truly!
Ah, come, my little Maia fair,
And peep in at the window there!

Viktor Rydberg, 1828–1895

VAIN QUEST OF BEAUTY

EXHAUSTLESS, Nature, is thy patient mood,
Yea, as the Deep from which thou art renewed.
May not thy hand grow weary at the last
Of imitating on this isle of Time
The patterns of a region more sublime,
When all that loveliness will soon be past?
Will thy hand never falter or grow weak
Strewing soft color on an infant's cheek
Or in a flower's cup, when thou dost know
The hues must perish like the sunset's glow?
The tender ones, with beauty as of heaven,
Bear to their grave the gifts that thou hast given.

Under Death's garland hast thou ever seen
On any furrowed brow the light serene
Of innocence thou pouredst on it? Never,
Neither on man's nor yet on woman's ever.
Thou bearest bud on bud in endless troop,
Whose promise is but born to fade and droop.
Thou weavest; then the web, for all thy skill,
Is rent, but never stands thy shuttle still.
Strange, that thy strength has lasted till to-day,
Thou from thy work-bench hast not shrunk away
Despairing at the grim, unending play!

THE TWO BELLS

TRANSPARENT and ethereal above the Sea of Time
A tower all of crystal uprears its form sublime.
The walls of its foundation sink down abysmally
More deep than any thought can reach or any eye can see.

It rises to the starry heavens, it pierces through and through,
Until it leaves the last lone star behind it in the blue;
It lifts its airy belfry through space to such a height
That man's imagination reels in terror at the flight.

Two bells there are suspended within that belfry's dome.
The first is wrought of dawn-light that streamed ere day had come.
It sways its golden clapper when flitting thoughts have birth,
And softly chimes in concord with the breathing of the Earth.

But, though it chimes so softly, it has a warning tone,
Which in a clear vibration sinks down from zone to zone,
And dies away on earth here with murmur faint and low
In the unrest of noble souls and in the sunset's glow.

How earnestly, how gently it prompts the chosen few
To dream high dreams, and strive then to make those dreams come true,

Reminding them each evening by sunset's flaming spell
Of distant, undiscovered lands where Truth and Beauty dwell.

Entreatingly it urges to haste the holy hour
When all men shall be brothers through Love's uniting power,
When each heart shall find comfort by soothing hands caressed,
Each weary head repose at last on a belovèd breast.

Entreatingly it urges mankind to rise up strong
And join with its pure accents in one vast freedom-song,
To send the joyous tidings out o'er the world's wide rim:
Behold the Earth is God's domain, and all men worship Him!

But ah! the other bell-form is filled with molten gloom
That clung within the darkness of Chaos' dismal womb.
The heavy clapper moves not, all hushed and dumb its might,
The hollow of the bell is like the vaulted depth of night.

And just below the belfry there sits in sombre thought
A demon, with his fingers around the bell-rope caught.
Unmoving as a statue, he gazes grimly down
On Time's loud-roaring billows that go past beneath his frown.

The billows now are gleaming, now shines the sun on high,—
But should a fearsome blackness o'ershadow all the sky,
And the last wave be broken amid the weltering foam
That rocked the poet's visioned hope of fairer life to come;

If blank despair should fall on the struggling human race,
The freedom-song be silenced by cravings weak or base,
And, numb with cold, the heart of youth perceive without a throe
The holy form of Goodness leave the Earth with fading glow;—

Then sudden on the bell-rope the hands would clench more tight,
Then would the demon tug there with mad and fierce delight,
The awful bell of Darkness would swing its mighty round,
And all the trembling Universe be shattered by the sound.

THE BATHING CHILDREN

Clumps of lilies-of-the-valley, daisies too on either hand
Fringe a small transparent brooklet gliding o'er its bed of sand;
Hedges clad in snowy blossoms breathe their perfume manifold,
Maples o'er the water-lilies lean their boughs of green and gold.

Two small children, boy and girl, are sitting there amid
the flowers,
Hawk-and-dove they 've been a-playing all the warm
long morning hours.
Says the boy, "I 'm going bathing, it 's so hot here in the
sun."
"Yes, the water 's cool," the girl says; "I 'll go bathing
too. What fun!"

Soon the boy has cast his stockings and his other clothes
aside,
Scattered on the grass about him, though the dew is
scarcely dried.
Pantaloons with bright suspenders which his mother
made for him,
Though discarded, show the roundness of each little
chubby limb.

By this careless heap the maiden, far more orderly than he,
Lays her kerchief, skirt, and bodice, with her linen,
daintily;
Lays on top her summer bonnet with its ribbons all
agleam,
And with shouts of joy the two then jump into the lim-
pid stream.

Look! to meet the merry children how the brook's clear
waters leap,
Round their fresh and lovely bodies cuddling wavelets
kiss and creep;

Pearly drops fly all around them high above the streamlet's brim
Where the boy with glad endeavor shows his playmate how to swim.

If she learn, he 'll fill her basket full of nuts, a princely treat.
How she sprawls and kicks and splashes with her plump and dainty feet!
How she stretches out first one arm, then the other, while she rests
With the boy's firm hands upholding underneath her tender breasts!

Meanwhile from her new-built dwelling in a bending maple tree,
Twittering, a sparrow-mother spies the two, and thus thinks she:
"Though they have no wings to fly with, yet their antics are the same
As when I and sparrow-father played in youth the splashing game."

So too when the lark above them, poising on his outstretched wing,
Sees the innocents at play there, loud his throbbing quavers ring,
Like an echo of the gladness that resounded to the skies
When the first lark sang his rapture o'er the groves of Paradise.

SONG OF THE ATHENIANS

Glorious is death, when thou in the first line gallantly fallest,
Fallest in fight for thy land, diest for city and home.
Up, then, with soul on fire to defend the soil of thy fathers,
Hasten to offer thy life gladly when opens the fray!
Forward, young men, march forward in close and unwavering order,
Never a tremor of fear, never a thought of retreat!
Shamed and dishonored an army, when young men, last in the phalanx,
Look on their elders in front, see where they bleed and are slain.
Ever the foremost place is the place of the youth, while he weareth
Still on his lovely locks garlanded flowers of spring.
Fair unto women, and noble to men in his lifetime he seemeth;
Beautiful even in death, slain in the midst of the fight.

FROM "DEXIPPOS"

THY GRIEF IS THINE

Thou know'st, O man, how heavy is thy care.
Seek not among thy feeble kind for rest!
Lay not thy grief on some o'erburdened breast!
Thy grief is thine, and thou alone must bear.

SNOWFRID

In the evening dusk when the storm raged high
He heard a voice at his window cry:
"Gunnar,
Now that the billows rush over the sea,
Come show thy courage, and let me try
If the young hot blood in thy breast reply;
Come out on the rolling waves with me!
And if no fear to thy heart come nigh,
Gunnar,
We'll steer for the Isle of Felicity."

It was Snowfrid:
Oft before in forest-wildernesses
He had seen that loveliest wood-nymph bright;
Her whose blue eyes glowed with starry light,
Fair the brow beneath her golden tresses.

He hasted him out, she took his hand,
And the two went down to the ocean-strand.
"Snowfrid,
In thy silvery robe how thy beauty gleams!"
The moon, which rose o'er the wood's gray band,
Suffusing the clouds with its reddish beams,
Lit the sails outspread at the nymph's command,
And the shallop sped forth in foam from the land.
"Snowfrid,
We swing on our way, O bride of my dreams!"

At his side
She could hear the winds their sagas telling,
Dreamily could watch the orbèd moon.
Round about the waves were thundering soon,
Round about the storm's loud wail was swelling.

Now crashing seas o'er the bulwarks fall,
Before them rises a headland tall.
"Gunnar,
The moonlight shows us where gold is stored,"
Thus, high on the crest of the great cliff-wall,
The little trolls tempt and beckon and call:
"Come, youth, and take here thy rich reward!
Come, and no more be Poverty's thrall!
Gunnar,
Give us thy soul, and take thou our hoard!"

With whistling of air and of flying spray
A raging host roars over the bay.
"Gunnar,
Now come the giants in furious train!"
Their swords are flashing, their banners sway,
A deafening homage their legions pay
To Might, whose fetters the world enchain.
"Give us thy soul, and thy name for aye,
Gunnar,
Shall shine with glory in Honor's fane."

But now on an inlet the moonlight played,
And hushed was the roar the billows made.

"Gunnar,"
So lured a voice, "turn hither to me!
A cottage waits in a forest glade,
A faith that never its vow betrayed.
Here may'st thou dream by the sighing sea;
The fairest of arms around thee laid,
Gunnar,
Shall lovingly weave thy destiny."

But Snowfrid raised herself
High in the prow:
"Better the battle's
Ill-paid guerdon
Than the sly dragon's
Ease mid gold-heaps;
Better to die for
The right, though scornèd,
Than to live famous
In selfish striving;
Better than peace is
The clasp of danger.
Choosest thou me, thou
Choosest the tempest.

"Strict the runes of
The hero-life.
Thus they bid thee
On evil giants
Thy vengeance wreak,

Boldly offer
Thy blood for the weak,
Willingly suffer,
All things forsake,
Fight a hopeless fight,
And nameless die.

"That is life's true hero-song.
Seek not the Isle of Felicity!"
With that she was gone,
Lost in a fog-wreath suddenly.
O'er the billowy desert he sailed alone.

. . .

Gunnar, youth!
Many a purpose toward the grave may speed thee,
If of these thou choose the warrior's way,
Through unrest, and grief, and change 't will lead thee,
And in mists of doubt thy feet will stray.
Weary, lone,
Must he fight who with his shield would cover
Those too weak to face the harsh world's wrath,
And the nearer heaven his hopes would hover,
By so much the harder is his path.

But, O youth,
Thou may'st see the nymph whom thou adorest,
If to thy best dreams thy heart be true;
Ye may sport as erstwhile in the forest,
She may sing thee songs of comfort too,

And for thee
Ope the door of boyhood-memory's garden,
When thou turnest there to rest from strife,
Where in Ida's vale the Norn is warden
O'er the dawn-gold tables of thy life.

LONGING

He longs with a tireless yearning,
Still seeking, wandering, turning
At all times and everywhere,
The sought-for goal receding,
Flitting, enticing, leading
With shifting likeness fair.

A nodding flower of azure
Above the field's ripe treasure
First lures the wanderer on,
But when he would stoop to pick it,
It sinks in the billowy thicket
Of rye-blades and is gone.

A banner all golden-rifted,
That spirit hands have lifted,
On sunset towers upborne,
An echo resounding faintly,
That's blown from an old and quaintly
Wrought silver legend-horn.

An organ-rapture outpouring
From some great cathedral soaring
Mid streets where visions dwell.
The blow of a hammer thund'rous
When angels rear a wondrous
Dream-lovely citadel.

A sighing of ocean surges
When dawn's first wave emerges
On night's pale galaxy.
He listens and looks with yearning,
Still this way and that way turning
To find what it may be.

A sea to which years run lightly,
A river that mirrors brightly
The spring and its beauties rare,
Beside whose waters haunted
Two mortals languish enchanted
And see but each other there.

The river hastes from the flowers
To autumn's golden bowers,
And whirls the dry leaves they wore
To ocean, the dark Unbounded.
The wanderer, staring astounded,
Asks: "What of the farther shore?"

Perhaps his desire is bended
On something uncomprehended,

Which no man may comprehend;
But he must ever be yearning,
Must ever be wandering, turning,
And seeking it without end.

And should he reach World's Ending,
With no road further tending,
The border of Nothingness,
He'd bend him over the steep there
And gaze into the deep there
With straining-eyed distress.

And leaning over the steep there,
He'd cry into the deep there,—
That echoless, vast Untrod,—
And onward the shout should go where
Is naught but the voice of Nowhere,
Go ringing through Chaos: "God!"

SHIPWRECK

He built of his dawn-bright dreaming
A pennoned vessel free,
In which to sail o'er the gleaming
Expanse of the mighty sea.

He built with eager endeavor,
For murmuring waves on the strand
Kept whispering to him ever
Strange tales of a far-off land.

A mist-glimmer oft suggested
A palm-bordered island dim,
A sound as of spirits that feasted
Was borne from the west to him.

But when he would fain be faring
A-sway on the rhythmic surge,
He suddenly saw a glaring
White flash from the heavens emerge;

Saw clouds like a line of battle
To south and to east, he caught
The voice of the storm's loud rattle
With din as of weapons fraught;

He saw dark squadrons of men on
The march at the thunder's beat
To fling down his pretty pennon
And trample it under their feet.

But the hour claimed his devotion;
Though heavy his heart, he gave
His little ship to the ocean
To speed before wind and wave.

He went to the fight, which wavered
All day mid the surf's mad throes;
The hero it sometimes favored,
Then favored in turn his foes.

When the sun from the sky hath hasted,
He stands by the sea once more,
His strand by the storm is wasted,
His wounds are bleeding sore.

The sky is darkening o'er him,
The black waves come and go,
They leave on the sands before him
Here and there a shred or so

Of his dawn-bright youthful dreaming,
Of his little wave-shattered ship,
Which should have sailed o'er the gleaming
Blue deep on its maiden trip.

THE HOUSE-GOBLIN

TOMTEN

Cold is the night, and still, and strange,
Stars they glitter and shimmer.
All are asleep in the lonely grange
Under the midnight's glimmer.
On glides the moon in gulfs profound;
Snow on the firs and pines around,
Snow on the roofs is gleaming.
All but the goblin are dreaming.

Gray he stands at the barnyard door,
Gray by the drifts of white there,

Looks, as oft he has looked before,
Up at the moon so bright there;
Looks at the woods, where the fir-trees tall
Shut the grange in with their dusky wall;
Ponders — some problem vexes,
Some strange riddle perplexes —

Passes his hand o'er beard and hair,
Shaking his head and cap then:
"Nay, that riddle's too hard, I swear,
I'll ne'er guess it mayhap then."
But, as his wont is, he soon drives out
All such thoughts of disturbing doubt,
Frees his old head of dizziness,
And turns him at once to business.

First he tries if the locks are tight,
Safe against every danger.
Each cow dreams in the pale moonlight
Summer dreams by her manger.
Dobbin, forgetful of bits that gall,
Dreams like the cows in his well-filled stall,
Leaning his neck far over
Armfuls of fragrant clover.

Then through the bars he sees the sheep,
Watches how well they slumber,
Eyes the cock on his perch asleep,
Round him hens without number.

Carlo wakes at the goblin's tread,
Wags then his tail and lifts his head;
Well acquainted the two are,
Friends that both tried and true are.

Last the goblin slips in to see
How all the folk are faring.
Long have they known how faithfully
He for their weal is caring.
Treading lightly on stealthy toes,
Into the children's room he goes,
Looks at each tiny treasure:
That is his greatest pleasure.

So has he seen them, sire and son,
Year by year in that room there
Sleep first as children every one.
Ah, but whence did they come there?
This generation to that was heir,
Blossomed, grew old, and was gone—but where?
That is the hopeless, burning
Riddle ever returning.

Back to the barn he goes to rest,
Where he has fixed his dwelling
Up in the loft near the swallow's nest,
Sweet there the hay is smelling.
Empty the swallow's nest is now,
Back though he 'll come when the grass and bough

Bud in the warm spring weather,
He and his mate together.

Always they twitter away about
Places through which they 've travelled,
Caring naught for the goblin's doubt,
Though it were ne'er unravelled.
Through a chink in one of the walls
Moonlight on the old goblin falls,
White o'er his beard it wanders;
Still he puzzles and ponders.

Forest and field are silent all,
Frost their whole life congealing,
Save that the roar of the waterfall
Faintly from far is stealing.
Then the goblin, half in a dream,
Thinks it is Time's unpausing stream,
Wonders whither 't is going,
And from what spring 't is flowing.

Cold is the night, and still, and strange,
Stars they glitter and shimmer.
All yet sleep in the lonely grange
Soundly till morn shall glimmer.
Now sinks the moon in night profound;
Snow on the firs and pines around,
Snow on the roofs is gleaming.
All but the goblin are dreaming.

CANTATA

FOR THE GRADUATION FESTIVAL AT UPSALA, THE SIXTH OF SEPTEMBER, 1877

Chorus

From the dark of the ages gliding
Toward a goal unknown to thee,
Through the desert thou hast been striding
Long, long, O Humanity!
Thy day is only a glimmer
Of feeble and pallid light,—
Before, the mist is yet dimmer;
Behind is the void of night.
The armies with which thou farest
Droop earthwards day by day,
And, trembling, thou nigh despairest:
"Almighty, whither leads the way?"

What sight upon Earth reveals not
That all things earthly fade like grass;
Look upward, and Heaven conceals not
That even there the glories pass,—
That suns in those lofty regions
Are halted or cease to be,
And quenched are the starry legions
In the aether's unmeasured sea.
Thou hearest how voices lonely
Cry: "All is transient here,

And Time and Space are only
A mighty prison dark and drear."

Recitative

And yet, though thou be sunken deep in doubt
And tarriest brooding by the road, anon
Thou tak'st again thy banner with a shout
And through the desert bear'st it boldly on.
What matter if a thousand suns are thrown
To Chaos from their firmament sublime?
What though a starry harvest lieth mown
Like golden grain beneath the scythe of Time?
Thy noble thoughts, thy acts of love, thy dreams
Of beauty—these Time never can devour;
Eternity like some great store-house teems
With sheaves safe-garnered from destruction's power.
Go forth, Mankind! be glad, thy cares at rest,
Thou bear'st Eternity within thy breast.

Arioso

Every soul that, yearning, gloweth
Toward The Good unceasingly
In its inmost being knoweth
Proof of immortality.
Let thy selfishness be chidden,
Let God's image in thee hidden
Toward His perfect likeness tend

With each age and generation,
So shalt thou through desolation
Win to Jordan at the end.

Chorus

Let thy selfishness be chidden,
Let God's image in thee hidden
Toward His perfect likeness tend
With each age and generation,
So shalt thou through desolation
Win to Jordan at the end.

Theology

(*Exod.* 17. 1 *Cor.* 10 : 4)

Dost thou doubt that in the distance waits for thee the Promised Land?
Dost thou faint with thirst and hunger, hopeless mid the burning sand?
See! the rod of Moses smiteth, from the rock the waters well.
On, Mankind, across the desert, on, thou greater Israel!
Still hast thou the rod to smite with and thy bitter thirst allay;
And the Rock—oh, glorious marvel!—follows ever on thy way.
Bend thy knee above the fountain, let its pure transparent wave
Cool thee, and go on rejoicing in the wondrous strength it gave!

Jurisprudence

(*Exod.* 19)

As before the hot simoon the clouds of dust are whirled along,
So the Tribes of Israel drifted forth from Horeb in a throng.
Can they ever reach the Jordan, marching thus in disarray?
See! Mount Sinai lifts its summit heavenward where the lightnings play!
Hill and vale resound with thunder at the voice of Justice then,
And each man's astounded bosom echoes back a deep "Amen!"
So the straggling ranks take order by the Law's divine commands,
Grown into a glorious people bound in one by sacred bands.

Medicine

(*Num.* 21 : 6)

With the Law's high tabernacle now they march unitedly,
Making way through hostile weapons toward the Land of Liberty.
But what strikes the troops with pallor? Wherefore did the banner sink?
Dread, insidious fever-serpents through the stricken army slink.

What can save them? This can save them. See the token
sent of God,
See the gleaming brazen serpent coiled around the Prophet's
rod!
And as, rescued by that symbol, Israel sought the path to
find,
So do ye, O strengthened nations, seek the goal of all man-
kind!

Philosophy

(*Exod.* 13: 21. *Deut.* 34)

FORTH, O wise and lovely peoples, to the goal which God
hath placed!
Ah, but how discern the pathway mid the phantoms of the
waste?
See, a fiery pillar leads us when the shadows dim the
light!
'T is the glow of Thought that shineth as a beacon in the
night.
Through the noon-tide haze before us goes a cloud-white
pillar fair,
Woven all of pure ideals, and God's spirit dwelleth there.
Last, a poet-seer on Nebo shouts exulting from the peak,
"Look, our Father's home is yonder! Forward to the land
ye seek!"

PSYCHE

Ah! poor Psyche, born mid shadows in this earthly vale of strife,
Long'st thou for ideal beauty, for a free and radiant life?
Yearn'st thou for a heavenly bridegroom? Hapless child, where leads thy way?
Will thy faint hope fail or will it reach the world of Bliss-for-Aye?

That 's the riddle that besets thee, in the darkness dim-descried,
Whispering: "Trust thou and imagine, that is joy, O lovely bride!"
Thou, too bold, art not contented: thou wilt see and thou wilt know.
Well, thou seest—thy fortune vanished, and thou know'st —thy heart's deep woe.

Was that sinful thou didst long for? No, if thou with steadfast strength
Darest all for what thou lovest, crossing Death's black flood at length
In the search thy duty urges, thou may'st bring to light again
From the midst of Hades' horrors proof thy hope is not in vain.

So, then, Psyche, one must journey to Olympus' shining height,
For no untried mortal ever may attain the gods' delight.
Eros' arms and cup of nectar filled with joy that never dies
Are but for a full devotion shrinking from no sacrifice.

King Oscar II, 1829–1907

HOIST THE FLAG!

Hoist the flag to world-wide admiration
Till aloft it proudly flies!
Heroes, lower swords in salutation!
Memories and hopes, arise
With that banner to the skies!

See yon cross there gleaming ever brighter,
Honor's gold on faith's fair blue!
'T is the ancient sign to each good fighter,
Victory is still his due
While in God his cause is true.

Triple dragon-tongues on high advancing,
Which the viking vessels bore,
From your lofty mast be ever glancing
On the ocean's azure floor,
Tokening the deeds of yore!

Noble memories have fixed their dwelling
In our ensign and our folk,
Of achievements in far countries telling,
Lands that bowed them to our yoke;
Still those tales our pride evoke.

Hail, thou witness of our ancient glory!
Hail, our friend in joy and pain!
Hail thou too, O ancient Swedish story,
Which in many a deadly fray
Taught us ne'er to feel dismay!

Wave, O faithful flag, let men behold thee
Ever honored, ever feared!
May'st thou still with colors brave unfold thee
Where blue billows are upreared,
Free and to the end revered!

Albert Teodor Gellerstedt, 1836–1914

FOREGROUND AND BACKGROUND

You may fill the foreground with common stuff,—
I take no offence, it is well enough;
But in the background I want the light
Of some blue crest on an unknown height.

And through the murmur of idle chat,
Of laughter and strife about this and that,
I long for a bell-tone deep and grand
To tell of rest in a better land.

MY BELIEF

A sudden hush of silence
When festive mirth runs high
Some people say betokens
An angel passing by.

But I believe that angels
In throngs draw nigh to hear,
When honest folk are merry
And laugh with right good cheer.

ISOLATION

Little island, you may fancy
You 're alone. It so might seem.
But a thing so isolated
Scarce could prosper, one would deem.

To the mainland's golden gardens
And its forests filled with song
You are bound beneath the waters
By a power deep and strong.

And the strait that seems to sever
From the turmoil of the shore,
See where heaven over-arching
Shines reflected on its floor!

THERE IS A LADDIE

There is a laddie, and mine is he,
A merry laddie and fine to see.

And he has promised me ring and troth,
And he 'll build a warm nest to hold us both.

And so with hand and with lips vowed I
To be his own till the day I die.

I 'll tell you, birch-tree with smooth white bark,
And you, big fir-tree of hue so dark,

And you, little flowers that gleam with dew,
And you, ye wavelets so bright and blue.

But silence! all of you. Don't forget
It must n't come to be talked of yet.

For only God in the sky may know,
And not a soul in the town below.

Count Carl Snoilsky, 1841–1903

INTRODUCTORY SONG
TO "TRAVEL SCENES"

I STAND with roses beside the highway,
I pour you beakers of foaming wine;
On every path and on every by-way
I rouse the tambour to rapture fine.

No vapid fictions of dream I bring you,
No empty visions for your behoof;
The world of beauty I fain would sing you
My own five senses have put to proof.

Ye learned sages, ye over-cunning,
The wares I have to your taste are few.
You, heart of twenty with blood warm-running,
My song will surely accord with you.

Come, heart that thrills in its every fibre,
That loves a tale when 't is briefly told;
Follow to Brent, yea, and to the Tiber,
Whenever the North may seem too cold.

Yon land in truth is an Eden Garden,
Where kindly summer abides for aye,
Save that no surly old angel-warden
Drives happy sinners from bliss away.

Come, let 's be off then, come, let 's be flying,
Hasting the snows from our feet to shake.
Soon, on a hillside of Como lying,
You 'll see the rainbow above the lake.

Hark to the organ's reverberation
Poured forth from Milan's cathedral fane!
But thank God also with jubilation
For freedom won on Magenta's plain.

Let no suggestion of sorrow menace,
Though joy now visits not Brent at all.
Free is Milan, free will be Venice
When freedom's red seed again shall fall.

Pass on to Rome then, the ancient mother,
But do not gaze there on barren space;
Nay, mid the ruins devise another
And better Capitol in its place.

Those antique earthen and golden vases,
Of what real use is their musty lore?
The sword that now at Caprera blazes
Can teach a lesson that 's worth far more.

Let connoisseurs make imposing stories
Of torso this or group that again.
I saw in streets there the old-time glories
In living women and living men.

In praising statues I 'll rival no man—
From most an arm or a leg is gone;—
I only know that the fairest woman
Is one that was never wrought in stone.

Though not a guide or an antiquary,
I know where one in warm smiles may bask;
By Naples' groves in the moonlight tarry,—
For favors there you need hardly ask.

You 'll see Vesuvius, high upsending
Its clouds of smoke in the bright blue air;
With sunburnt girls, who the vines are tending,
Wash down your surplus of knowledge there.

Ay, let us hasten there, let us spring there
Like wanton colts filled with pure delight!
Hark! flutes invisible pipe and sing there
From breeze, from billow, from dale and height.

Ah, what my poor heart has suffered!—Fie on
Dress coats and nonsense and vanity!
Leap out, leap out from your cage, my lion,
And smite around you with savage glee.

Ay, let 's be joyous, our heart-beats hushing
Where roses fade in the twilight gray;
Though one next morning must needs be blushing
For godlike blisses of yesterday.

To-day it may be a few will heed me,
Although my tenor be weak and thin;
But soon a stronger will supersede me
And I shall cease when his notes begin.

To-morrow men may forget completely
My little poem, whose melody
Like a small fountain is playing sweetly
In sunlit confident ecstasy.

Come pluck my roses beside the highway,
And lean your lips to my foaming wine!
On every path and on every by-way
I rouse my tambour to rapture fine.

APHRODITE AND THE KNIFE-GRINDER

(TWO STATUES IN THE TRIBUNA HALL OF THE UFFIZI GALLERY)

HERE in this glowing hall of treasures
An unknown force keeps drawing me
To thee, celestial Aphrodite,
And, dusky Knife-Grinder, to thee.

How is it ye are such near neighbors,—
I 've often puzzled what it meant,—
Thou, the all-wondrous Queen of Beauty,
And thou, plebeian, coarse and bent?

Ah, loveliness of form but dwells with
Its opposite in halls of Art,
As in the world the life of Beauty
With Toil and Pain, its counterpart.

Dame Aphrodite shuts her ears to
All sounds that do not harmonize,
Her skin of alabaster shivers
When aught that 's ugly meets her eyes.

The World, which struggles, fights, and suffers,
Is hushed before her haughty feet,
As on her native isle of Cyprus
Unheard the muffled billows beat.

Not for the strife of clay-born creatures
She leaves her cold security;
One law she knows—the Law of Beauty,
One goal—her own fair destiny.

Her way fits well with that of mortals
Who polish every line uncouth
Of Life's deep-furrowed pain and passion
Till all at last is marble-smooth.

A gulf divides her from yon fellow,
The thrall her neighbor bending here
Above his knife, that is not sharpened,
Though 't 'as been ground a thousand year.

As she from sea-foam rainbow-tinted,
So he is sprung from common earth;
With sweat and blood the soil was leavened
From which his giant form had birth.

Look at his great rough thews, his muscles
Gnarled by the fate he needs must face;
Look at his hand, which toil has twisted
So far from beauty and from grace!

An exhortation hovers o'er him,
A half-born thought, a broken tone:
"Arise, thou yoke-tormented being,
The earth thou stand'st on is thine own!"

Each elemental force unbridled
Incites and tempts the giant on:
"Take our example," says their roaring.
But woe to us! if that were done.

Is there no Bridge-of-Reconciling,
Can none between such neighbors be?
Will she, the proud one, never soften
And go to him with sympathy?

Will Beauty, from the People severed,
Go on thus with her selfish life?
Will never he who kneels beside her
Be done with grinding at his knife?

Step down, O Art, our Aphrodite,
From thy cold height to his relief,
And let thy stone-hard heart be melted
To learn of human joy and grief!

Descend in love unto thy brother
To loosen Labor's galling band,
To dry the sweat from off his forehead
And wrench the dagger from his hand!

OLD CHINA

A GREAT collector was the Saxon king,
His craze for china had *some* bounds, until
He sent his royal guard to do the will
Of Prussia's lord—to get a bowl of Ming!

Five hundred men with guns and swords to swing,
Such could the Prussian use with right good skill:
Men supple in manoeuvre, deft in drill,
In war a wall—for that blue Chinese thing!

Five hundred men with all their gear intact!
Why, since the world began, so mad an act—
No doubt you all agree—was heard of never.

Since then a generation has passed o'er:
Five hundred gallant hearts now beat no more:
The ancient bowl—'t is there as good as ever.

EDELWEISS

On peaks where the clouds have sifted
Their snows o'er the naked ground,
Where no blade of grass is lifted,
And no Alpine rose is found,—
Pure white in those dreary spaces,
A flower blooms mid the ice,
The crags all its life it graces,
And men call it edelweiss.

When Autumn's wild blasts are killing
All flowers in zones less rare,
With frost-cruel fingers chilling
The cheeks that are blooming there,
When roses their heads have bended
And strewn their last leaves below,
When Beauty's long reign is ended,
The edelweiss blooms in snow.

Yon flower in truth must cherish
A love of no common worth,
That lives when all else doth perish
And Beauty has passed from earth.
Her love from that rocky summit
Looks down on the fading rose;
Yet never can ice benumb it,
It blooms till her life shall close.

THE PORCELAIN FACTORY

THERE at the factory I like to see
The porcelain workers bending busily
To turn the pliant clay on restless wheels,
Till jug or plate at length its form reveals.

More than wrought silver do you win my praise,
You jug but destined for a plain white glaze.
More than a vessel made for some rich lord
I reverence you, plate for a meagre board.

You I respect, O unpretentious mould,
That shortly, reproduced a thousand-fold,
Will pass in artisan's or peasant's nest,
When labor takes a scanty meal-time rest.

I'm sick of all the useless gaudy wares,
For whose vain beauty no one really cares;
But hail the hand whose cunning is bestowed
On weary workers in a mean abode!

Yes, hail the unknown hand, and hail to him
That formed the homely beaker, to whose brim
A warm and thirsty mouth in haste will glide,
When the worn tools are laid an hour aside!

The hand whose work we pass and never see
Is far more indispensable than we,

Mere bubble-blowers of high-sounding words
At play by culture's overladen boards.

Ah, that a man might mould a poem so,
Of simple words that every one should know,
Might shape a form for offering daily bread
To hungry folk, not to the overfed!

Ah, would that I might make, on such a plan,
A cup to suit the mouth of every man,
Which, brimming from the well of Time, might long
Give drink to thousands thirsting after song!

SORRENTO

I SING of the cliffs that descend to
The bay lying blue at their foot
And see in the waters they bend to
Their gardens all golden with fruit;

Of pines, too, their perfume out-sending
From cloud-covered peaks far away,
Of landscapes where colors are blending
Afresh every hour of the day.

Sorrento, thou beautiful charmer,
Thy musical name I adore,
Like winds in the leafage that murmur
And ripples that lapse on the shore.

All griefs that my forehead would furrow
Must fade when I think upon thee;
No thorn shall afflict me with sorrow
Since thou wert a rose unto me.

How gladly does memory, straying,
Recall thee when clouds were aglow:
A breeze in the branches was playing
Till oranges tumbled below.

I stood in the shade, with the bay-line
Curved wide in a circle beneath:
There Ischia loomed in a gray line,
Yon smoke was Vesuvius' breath.

I took out my poet Saturnian,—
My Horace, the bard of good cheer,
Whose verses of girls and Falernian
Well fitted when vineyards were near.

The cares of my former existence,
How weak now their hold upon me!
Like valley-mist faint in the distance
I saw them grow pallid and flee.

I tasted the rapture of Flaccus,
My spirit took fire at his flame;
So near to his Lydia and Bacchus,
I felt that our joys were the same.

Sorrento, whate'er may befall me,
Thou bindest with triple-wrought band:
Thy maidens, thy vineyards enthrall me,
And still more thy murmuring strand.

How gladly my thoughts would forsake there
Myself and my world by the shore;
I dreamed, as the billows would break there,
Sense-lulled by the monotone roar.

What joy at the sultry day's ending
To stand all prepared for the leap!
How fine, as the sun was descending,
To mimic his plunge in the deep!

The star o'er the fortress was lighted,
When wakened the Cyprian sect.
Each balcony softly invited,
Sorrento, in thy dialect.

How quickly Love helps one to capture
A speech, when the learner is young!
The notes of the nightingale's rapture
He taught to a harsh northern tongue.

Sorrento, beloved of my spirit,
That showered thy roses on me,
Alas! though I hardly can bear it,
I 'm parted forever from thee.

My poor heart will break, being sent to
The snows of this chill northern land.
It yearns for the sun and Sorrento;
Sorrento, it yearns for thy strand.

How oft in this waste I 've lamented,
When, grieving, thy loss I recall:
Oh, would Fortune never had granted
That I should have seen thee at all!

But then, overcome with contrition,
I clasp the sweet visions that throng,
And weave with a fond repetition,
Sorrento, thy name in my song.

BLACK SWANS

Black swans, like a sad procession,
O'er the wave their journey take,
Following the sun's last glimmer
Out across the darkening lake.

Sable, as though flames had blackened,
Is their feathery garment's hue;
Silent beaks of blood-bright purple
Show their fiery nature too.

White swans tamely by the margin
Circle where the crumbs alight.
Forth unto the deep, ye black ones;
Forth, ye glowing brood of night!

BIRDS ON A TELEGRAPH WIRE

On yonder taut aerial wire,
A bridge where thought is speeding,
A merry little sparrow-choir
Sits careless and unheeding.

They chirp through life as in a dream,
They sport there, never knowing
Of that unbroken, silent stream
That through the wire is flowing.

Though thought goes by in endless round,
The sparrows no more hear it
Than we may catch the whispered sound
From the dim World of Spirit.

Our questions find no sure reply,
Though deep and wondrous answers
To all we ask are flitting by
Like waves of airy dancers.

Scarce in our clay-dim nature rings
An echo of their brooding,
When softly murmur the twin strings
Called Memory and Foreboding.

BENVENUTO CELLINI

"Cellini, play the man," King Francis said.
"You work on trifles longer than is right.
Cast me a Zeus whose like ne'er saw the light."
The king had bidden, and the man obeyed.

Into the mould the master's hand had made
The metal ran. But view Cellini's plight!
The bronze gives out. Shall all be ruined quite,
The artist baffled and the king betrayed?

What did Cellini? Reckless of the cost,
He threw his precious toys into the fire.
There stood the god, a masterpiece entire.

Thus many golden dreams of youth are lost
In life and art. But mourn not such bereavement,
'T is only so we win to full achievement.

NOLI ME TANGERE

My heart's delight and grief are not a bait
For market, to be soiled by unknown hands.
Bright toys my Fancy gives to your demands;
My inmost temple opens not its gate.

If you turn not your back upon me straight,
Come to my park. How dim and cool it stands!
Go amid flowers brought from southern lands,
And view my portal, sculptured and ornate.

Over the threshold, though, I shall not lead you.
The stony sentinel will never heed you,
He lets but light and perfume visit me.

You 'd force me? Good! A single word I utter,
And park and castle in an eyelid's flutter
Are gone, and whirling sand is all you see.

KING ERIK

Soft the barges glide with banners flying,
Mälar takes the sunset's hue of pink,
Oars are splashing, merry horns replying,
Woods breathe perfume by the water's brink.
Drop your oars and with the current sway,
Idly let us drift, this night in lovely May!
Horn, be silent now,
Echo, listen thou,
While plays on his lute King Erik.

Ay, upon his lute the king is playing,
Sweetly on his broidered knee it sings,
His white hands in melody are straying
O'er its cedar frame and silver strings.

Hushed beside him little Karin lies
Listening till the tear-drops gather in her eyes.
"Come, my shepherdess,
Why unhappiness?"
Now plays on his lute King Erik.

"Dost thou fear some ambush of my brother,
Tell me, sun of all my heart's desire?
Still upon the throne am I, none other,
Still I rule the kingdom of my sire.
Till yon peak is crowned with purple light
Let's do naught but love in springtime's glowing night!
Many an hour 't will take
Ere the morning break."
So plays on his lute King Erik.

"Little Karin, 't is the king doth woo thee:
Yield, and Stockholm castle thou shalt share.
Say one word—a crown I 'll give unto thee
That shall pale around thy golden hair.
I am Erik, lord of lovely dreams;
Light the crown is, moulded of the moon's bright beams.
Weep not, little one,
And my land 's thine own!"
So plays on his lute King Erik.

Edvard Bäckström, 1841–1886

A SONG OF STEN STURE

YOUNG Sten, all fear defying,
In Doveness Forest he fought.
And if I had wings for flying,
I know where I 'd fain be brought.
"Ye men of the Dale," he thundered,
"Let helmet and shield be sundered!
For never a dread have we.
There 's many a carl untried here
That fights to-day at my side here,
But soon a knight he may be."

Bold Sten, all fear defying,
He battled by Brenkirk town.
And if I had wings for flying,
It 's there they should put me down.
"'T is either stand or fall, men.
Now, who 's the bravest of all, men,
To bear our banner on high?"
A golden-haired youth stepped out then,
And answered him with a shout then:
"I' faith, Sten, and that will I!"

True Sten, all fear defying,
He fell at Osunda Lake.
And if I had wings for flying,
It 's there that my death I 'd take.
He lay on his couch, sore wounded,
While flurry of snow surrounded,
And blithely spoke to his clan:
"Why fear, though I am departed?
In danger be still light-hearted!
God always can find His man."

Carl David af Wirsén, 1842–1912

BOOKS AND LOVE

When at your desk you sit with studious look
Forgetting all the world for one small book,

And she who is your all comes up behind you
And nestles, eager in her arms to bind you,

Don't gruffly bid her leave you, don't demur,
But leave your book and go along with her!

Your dusty tomes will bide with you for aye,
You do not know how long your love will stay.

There 's many a lonely man with care-worn brow
Would gladly be disturbed as you are now.

Let love illuminate in shining gold
Your book with pictures lovely to behold!

So, should your home be desolated quite,
The ancient book will stream with holy light,

And where you now are vexed, at your right hand
A beckoning angelic form will stand.

MOONBEAMS

When starry legions gleam on
The dusk of the heavens above,
And drops of silver stream on
Each murmuring brook and grove,
Why is it the fir-trees shiver,
What sets our hearts all a-quiver?
What secret disturbs us ever
When whispers of twilight rove?

When through the leafy branches
That trellis the forest glade
A pale beam falls and blanches
The spray of the bright cascade,
What wakens each eerie feeling
Our bosoms have been concealing,
Forgotten beauty revealing
Till tears can no more be stayed?

Know, when on paths deserted
And lonely thy footsteps roam,
The souls of the departed,
Of all that loved thee, come.
From danger they seek to save thee,
And of the soft beams that lave thee
A shimmering net they weave thee
And draw thee unto their home.

August Strindberg, 1849–1912

SABBATH EVE

Mirror-still the bay, no breeze molesting,
Sailors drop the sails, the mill is resting.
Oxen to the verdant fields may fare now,
All things for the day of peace prepare now.

Through the forest runs a woodcock-roading,
From yon porch accordion notes are flooding,
Paths are swept and raked,—no task is trifled,—
Fruit-trees watered, lilac bushes rifled.

Children's dolls are lying in disorder
Under tulip blossoms by the border.
In the grass a ball, well hid from spying,
In the water-butt a trumpet 's lying.

Shutters have been closed, and people hasten
Now to draw the bolts, the locks to fasten.
Last the mistress leaves no candle gleaming;
Soon the household will be lost in dreaming.

While the warm June night so softly drowses,
And no breeze the weather-vane arouses,
On the shore the waves are lightly sounding,
Where the swell of last week's storm is pounding.

THE ESPLANADE METHOD

WHERE ancient hovels stood so close
They shut off all the sunny weather,
One day men saw with poles and crows
A gay young troop come there together.

Then dust and chaff
Rose up like smoke,
As plank and lath
Apart they broke.

The rotten wood,
As dry as snuff,
Whirled 'round, with lime
And other stuff.

And axes laid
The timbers low,
And walls were felled
With stalwart blow.

The pick-axe ripped,
The hooks took hold,
And down the roofs
And chimneys rolled.

From hut to hut
The wreckers went
Till one and all
To earth were sent.

Just then by chance an old man came
And with amazement saw the tearing.
He stood; to him it seemed a shame
As mid the ruins he'd been faring.

"What do you mean to build, good men?
Will there be streets of villas made here?"
"We shall not build it up again.
We're clearing for an esplanade here."

"Such are the times: to break and tear!
But to build up — oh, that were frightful!"
"We break to give you light and air;
Is not, perhaps, our method rightful?"

Ernst Josephson, 1851–1906

THE CELLO

I HEAR within my heart of hearts
A trembling tone of grief that sings
Like melancholy cello strings,
Then softly, meltingly departs.

The cello feels a sharper pain
Whene'er the string is drawn more taut,
And is with sadder music fraught
Each time the peg is turned again.

The Player's grasp hurts too, when He
Is fain more lovely tunes to make.—
Ah God! and if the string shall break,
My soul will leap forth and be free!

Albert Ulrik Bååth, 1853–1912

"IF I WERE A POET"

If I were a poet, and gray and tired,
And found I had come to be much admired
By cultured cliques for my style so rare,
With my picture in book-shops everywhere;
'T would give me small joy as I sat apart,
Worn-out and faint at heart.

But I know what would bring the blood to my cheek
And stir my marrow, though never so weak,—
If I saw from my window some day in spring
The workingmen pass, and they should sing
In time to their step as they strode along,
And mine should be the song.

Daniel Fallström, 1858–

TO A SEA-GULL IN THE STEAMER'S WAKE

Snow-white gull, oh, would to you 't were given
All the gladness of your life to know,
While you hovered in the blue of heaven
Gazing on the wide-spread waves below!

Perched upon some cliff above the surges,
You may rest and watch the dawn grow gray,
See the sun's red disc as it emerges,
While the light-house beacon fades away.

Born sole heir of ocean's vast dominions,
Your first cradle-song the roaring wave,
Never sullying your shining pinions,
In the morning light your breast you lave;

Lave it in the brine too, when the ocean
Glitters mirror-like in calm repose,
Or its ponderous waves in mad commotion
Grimly charge the reefs, their ancient foes.

Only in the spring when northward flying
Do you pause to view the Stockholm folk;
Fishing here, you watch the steamers lying
In a row and belching clouds of smoke.

I am happy every time I see you,
As above Ship Island's bridge you soar.
Summer thoughts come o'er me, for to me you
Bring gay pictures of a rocky shore.

Therefore, sea-gull, may you gladly follow
In our steamer's wake, where'er it goes,
Gladly snatching from the foaming billow
What a little willing hand bestows.

OH, NEVER ASK!

Oh, never ask, my son, what love may be—
Oh, never ask, for I cannot declare it.
Should life reveal to you the mystery,
You, just as I, could let no other share it.

You see a pair of eyes,—you know not how,—
A lock that flutters; lips too, smiling lightly.
And presto! where 's your heart flown off to now?
The sun, however, seems to shine more brightly.

You hear an unknown voice, and in dismay,
You lose from that first moment all your reason,
Touched by the magic wand of some small fay,
Some girl who has not seen her eighteenth season.

Within the wood's deep twilight, where the thrush
Is warbling, and the moon gleams on the water,

Your soul takes wings beside her in the hush,
As through that night of June you've gently brought her.

You 'd gather the green world in your embrace,
A world of love-songs and of spring-sweet blisses;
And then before you dared to ask the grace,
Your lips have won of hers a thousand kisses.

Leaning together, while your spirits yearn,
You drink the cup Oblivion's hand is reaching —
Why need you care, though all the world should burn,
If toward you two no hungry flames are stretching?

Why should you care, though all things go to rack,
Though Night and Chaos rule the world at pleasure,
If for one moment two deep orbs of black
Foretell a happiness beyond all measure.

Oh, never ask, my son, what love may be —
Oh, never ask, for I cannot declare it.
Should life reveal to you the mystery,
You, just as I, could let no other share it.

STOCKHOLM IN WHITE

Alike in green or snowy pride
My ardent gaze you capture;
Now clad in white, a winter bride,
You fill my soul with rapture.

You stand there hushed as in a dream,
While starry twinklings cover
The waters of the dark North Stream,
Though Mälar 's frozen over.

You 're like some tale of olden days,
When western skies are glowing
And high above the frozen bays
The purple deeps are showing.

The sunset gilds the towers there,
The roofs give back a shimmer
Like silver, while with flame-red glare
The castle windows glimmer.

With winter's ermine o'er you laid,
While church-bells toll serenely,
You shine in robe and crown arrayed,
A vision high and queenly.

You put all baser thoughts to flight,
All passions of the mart now,
Till in the silence of the night
I hear your beating heart now.

Your old proud look returns again,
All ugliness is banished,
The meanness and the lies of men
Before that glance have vanished.

Verner von Heidenstam, 1859–

HOME–LAND

What old man has not in his mournful keeping
The smallest thing that made his life of worth?
He sees a door, a woman bent and weeping,
As toward a grave the young man journeyed forth.

He recollects each room, though poor and base,
Each window-sill, of myrtle faintly smelling.
How should the heart less fervently embrace
The land that is our home, our earthly dwelling?

They stand there yet by lake or lone morass,
Red cottages and manor-halls majestic.
Behind yon frosted panes our sires would pass,
And Yule-tide candles glowed with joy domestic.

This was their vision, this it was that drove
Their hands to build for us, the coming races.
All that which bound them unto life with love
Lives yet in memories round their vacant places.

By the same hearth, when evening shadows come,
We speak of them, some childish hand caressing.
O thou, our native land, our larger home,
Weave of our lives thy glory and thy blessing!

FELLOW-CITIZENS

As sure as we have a fatherland
We are heirs to it one with another,
By common right in an equal band
The rich and his needy brother.
Let each have his voice as we did of old
When a shield was the freeman's measure,
And not all be weighed like sacks of gold
By a merchant counting his treasure.

We fought for our homes together when
Our coast by the foeman was blighted.
It was not alone the gentlemen
Drew sword when the beacons were lighted.
Not only the gentlemen sank to earth
But also the faithful yeomen;
'T is a blot on our flag that we reckon worth
By wealth, and poor men are no men.

'T is a shame to do as we oft have done,—
Give strangers the highest places,
But beat our own doors with many a stone
And publish our own disgraces.
We are weary of bleeding by our own knife,
When the heart from the head we sever;
We would be as one folk with a single life,
Which we are and shall be forever.

PRAYER AMID FLAMES

Holy Spirit, I worship thee.
Fire and Victory is thy name.
Shine in our need, O spirit of power,
Shine o'er the gulf of our dread last hour,
Burn unto ashes our mortal frame!—
Even in death mine arms shall be
Outstretched in prayer to thy deathless flame.

MY LIFE

Glide on, my life! I love thee not so much
That I would set thine hours with busy care
In a shop-window for a common show.
I never say: "Come, press the master hand
That lures to birth such wondrous lovely flowers!"

When I have been betrayed by trusted friends
And heavy fortune follows on my path,
I do not bear with me a silver cup
Of tears and say to him who passes by:
"Oh, lay thine arm about my neck and weep,
And pity me, and let us both lament!"

Oh, thou wide world, my greatest grief
Is but the shadow of a cloud.
I go in silence to my grave.

STARTING ON THE JOURNEY

Already I 'm upon the bridge that leads
From Earth unto a land beyond my ken,
And far to me is now what once was near.
Beneath, as formerly, the race of men
Praise, blame, and forge their darts for warlike deeds;
From here I see that true and noble creeds
Even on foemen's shields are blazoned clear.
No more does life bewilder with its riot.
I am as lonely as a man may be;
Still is the air, austere, and winter-quiet;
Self is forgot, and I go forward free.
I loose my shoes and cast aside my stave.
Softly I go, for I would not defile
With dust a world so pure, all white as snow.
Beneath, men soon may carry to a grave
A wretched shape of human clay, the while
Mumbling a name — 't was mine once long ago.

A MAN'S LAST WORD TO A WOMAN

Love-dazed, on rosy paths I sought thee far;
That was the spring, my gay and stormy prime.
Then I encountered thee with smiles and war;
Those were the manhood years of summer-time.
I thank thee for the joy thy presence gave;
'T is autumn, when our bed must be — the grave.

SWEDEN

O Sweden, Sweden, Sweden, native land,
The home and haven of our longing!
The cow-bells ring where heroes used to stand,
Whose deeds are story, but with hand in hand
To swear the ancient troth thy loyal sons are thronging.

Fall, winter snow! And sigh, thou wood's deep breast!
Burn, all ye stars, in summer heavens peeping!
Sweden, mother, be our strife, our rest,
Thou land wherein our sons shall build their nest,
Beneath whose church-yard stones our noble sires are sleeping.

THE DOVE OF THOUGHT

Lone the dove of thought goes lagging
Through the storm, with pinions dragging
O'er an autumn lake the while.
Earth 's aflame, the heart 's a-fever.
Seek, my dove,—alas! thou never
Comest to Oblivion's isle.

Hapless dove, shall one brief minute,
Flaming, fright thee to a swoon?
Sleep thou on my hand. Full soon,
Hushed and hurt, thou 'lt lie within it.

"GRANT THAT WE DIE YOUNG"

Give but the happiness our tongue
Would quaff, but only sips in stinted measure;
Pour us a brimming draught of pain, of pleasure,
And grant that we die young!

Man doth not ever find amid the grasses
A plant that wind and frost more quickly slay,
Nor doth he form a vessel out of clay
More brittle than himself — so soon he passes.
What though he build the structure stone by stone
Of all his knowledge, thought, and will, and yearning?
Ere on his grave the grass to green is turning
His crumbling temple unto dust is blown,
And like a withered branch the spire is overthrown.

'T is day as yet, and joyful songs are sung
By temple maidens dancing on the mead.
When it is dark, then let us homeward speed; —
Oh, grant that we die young!

MOONLIGHT

'T is strange that I sit here in wakeful mood,
Though day has brought me nor joy nor gain;
But all of which ever my life was fain,
And all that was hidden in gloom and pain,
Is trembling to-night in yon silvery flood.

INVOCATION AND PROMISE

If the neighbor-lands three should cry: "Forget
Our greatness of bygone ages!"
I'd answer: "Arise, O North, who yet
May'st be what my dream presages!"
The vision of greatness may bring again
New deeds like those of our betters.
Come, open the graves—nay, give us men
For Science and Art and Letters!

Ay, close to a cliff, let our people stand,
Where a fool his poor neck may shatter.
There are other things, men, to hold in your hand
Than a brim-full Egyptian platter.
It were better the plate should be split in two
Than that hearts should rot when still living.
That no race may be more great than you,—
That 's the goal, why count we the striving?

It were better to feel the avenger's might
Than that years unto naught should have hasted,
It were better our people should perish quite
And our fields and cities be wasted.
It is braver the chance of the dice to take
Than to mope till our fire is expended;
It is finer to hear the bow-string break
Than never the bow to have bended.

I wake in the night, but I hear no sound
Save the waters seething and churning.
Like a soldier of Judah, prone on the ground,
I could pray with passionate yearning.
I ask not a year of sunshine bright,
Nor for golden crops I importune.
Kind Fate, let the blazing thunderbolt smite
My people with years of misfortune!

Yea, smite us and lash us into one,
And the bluest of springs will follow.
Ye smile, my folk, but with face as of stone,
Ye sing, but your joy is hollow.
Ye rather would dance in silk attire
Than solve your own riddle clearly.
To youthful deeds ye might yet aspire
If again ye could weep sincerely.

Then on, fair daughter, in hardship bred,
Let shyness and sloth forsake thee!
We love thee so that, if thou wert dead,
Our love to life could awake thee.
Though the bed be hard, though the midnight lowers,
We 'll be true while the tempest rages,
Thou people, thou land, thou speech that is ours,
Thou voice of our souls to the ages!

FROM "THOUGHTS IN LONELINESS"

THERE is a spark dwells deep within my soul.
To get it out into the daylight's glow
Is my life's aim both first and last, the whole.

It slips away, it burns and tortures me.
That little spark is all the wealth I know;
That little spark is my life's misery.

A DAY

WITH twinkling stars the sky is crowned,
Although the peasant with his light
Is rambling on his farm-yard round.
Now to the woods with deep, soft sound
Goes fluttering the Bird of Night.
The cottage clock is striking five,
The streak of morn is gleaming.
The factory wheels are all alive,
The fire and sparks are streaming.

To north, where pine and fir-trees float,
The earliest rays have hurried
To tinge the heath. A cow-horn's note
O'er the smooth lake is carried.
The beams now touch a pale white peak,
Or on some torrent settle

That, frozen, hangs on ledges bleak.
Above a Lapp's tent whirls the reek,
And flames leap round his kettle.
Out on the snow, with branching horns
His deer stand in a ring there.
No house, no tower yon land adorns,
Nor is there bell to sing there.
Night seethes around, an ocean vast,
For all things come to night at last.

Thou sun, whose might bestoweth
On each least plant a quickening dower,
Grant us thy bright creative power
As long as day still gloweth!
Eager the heart, but time is short.
Oh, hark to our imploring,—
Thou whom our fathers once did court,—
On us thy radiance pouring.
Go forth, go forth, thou new-born day,
With morning-song and hammer-play,
And let not fear come o'er us!
Kindle brave strife, our hearth-stone guard;
Send, lightning-like, a spirit-sword
To flash the road before us!
Shine far across o'er folk and land,
Make rich our soul, make firm our hand,
So that with gladness we may bear
Such years as age shall bring,
And still like sowers onward fare
Into the world's new Spring!

FROM "THE FOREST OF TIVEDEN"

PART I

Hark how the fir-trees in dismal tones,
Like the minor discords of drum and horn,
Sing a weird lament, all squeaks and groans,
That trolls have composed in this land forlorn!

And here, while gnat-swarms pipe and dance,
Past ages arise as in a trance.
These ferns have survived an earlier aeon;
Those moss-grown rocks with impending mass
Are piled in a rampart cyclopean;
Each rotten log in the wild morass
Is a deep-sea monster, that here sticks out
At the edge of the water his dripping snout.

With reptilian scales yon pine-tree's root
Stands deep in the ooze, like a saurian's foot;
And others, like spiders, are poised unsteady
On the edge of the cliffs where the step grows giddy.

But silence! A shaggy head is shaking
The net-work of twigs, the dry stumps breaking
And laying them low on the heather dense.
'T is the elk. As mighty and immense
As a mastodon, he now is slaking
His thirst in the swamp. He looks about,
Wild-eyed, at the mountains that shut him in,

While silvery threads are trickling out
Of his panting muzzle and bearded chin.

The haughty pine, as if in fear
Of the light, creeps close to the gravel here.
See the mountains! they rise not in splendid shapes
Of eternal snow, but are squat and gray;
They stand like beggars in thread-bare capes
That are dingy now since many a day.
And had we the murkiest words at hand
They were not dark or gloomy enow
To paint in verse that primeval land,
Which is ever preaching: "Renounce, forsake!"
The peasant bites at his black rye cake,
And loose stones rattle beneath his plough.
How gray, how clad in joylessness
Are all of the scenes that meet me!
My native soil, in the ragged dress
Of poverty you greet me.

THE BURIAL OF GUSTAF FRÖDING

Forth they go
In endless procession
One by one with their silent tread.
Bells are tolling. Deep, slow
With rumbling vibration
Singing their song to the march of the dead.

I hear, as I sit half-dreaming,
The bell-notes that beat from miles away.
All of our land, beneath winter gleaming,
Hears the bells as they ring to-day.
Summer were you and blossoming spring,
Sigh of the reeds by lake-lapped strands.
Sleep, O singer, whose bier they bring
Borne by a thousand hands.

White was your hair, and long your beard;
The sun shone in on your Bible's page,
And you in your bare-walled room appeared
Like Job mid his ashes, bent with age.
How wondrous great is man's destiny:
Dreams and old tales and the flowing sea,
Floods and flames and the choir of the storm!—
But weak as a reed is his own frail form.

Die, die!—so echoes the cry
To him that creates with yearning passion.
All must perish,
All that is earthly must die, must die;
But no, 't is himself that his strong hands fashion.

Pass, O bard, erect as a king,
To the host of the shades through the darksome portal!
Still we cherish
Your limpid-silvery notes immortal,
Singing to us as they used to sing.

AT THE END OF THE WAY

Wise, O Man, thou only shalt become
When thou winn'st unto the evening coolness
Of the topmost height, the Earth o'erlooking.
Turn thee at the ending of the way,
Rest an hour, O king, and look behind thee!
All is clear there, all is reconciled,
And the realm of youth once more is gleaming,
Strewn as erst with light and morning dew.

NAMELESS AND IMMORTAL

Finished, in Paestum's rose-embowering garden,
Stood Neptune's temple, and the man who planned
Sat near. His young wife, on his shoulder leaning,
Spun with the yellow distaff in her hand.
She listened to the piping of the herdsmen
Who tended on the hills their droves of swine,
And with an almost childish joy she murmured,
Twisting the flax about her fingers fine:
"My cup of happiness is filled to brimming.
The man who brings me home to Naxos' strand,
Now he has built yon glorious Neptune temple,
Returns, immortal, to his native land."

Then solemnly her husband answered her:
"No, when we die, our name will pass away
A few years after, but yon temple there

Will still be standing as it stands to-day.
Think you an artist in his time of power
Sees in the background multitudes that shout?
Nay, inward, only inward, turns his eye,
And he knows nothing of the world without.
'T is therefore that the bard would weep hot blood
If he deliver not his pregnant soul;
But he would kiss each line wherein he sees
His spirit live again, true-born and whole.
'T is in such lines as these he lives and moves.
He strives for immortality — but mark!
'T is for his writings, never for himself;
The man's true reputation is his work.
What 's Homer? At the very best a myth!
We seek to clasp a more enduring fame.
The pulse leaps when we see his temple's pride,
For 'Iliad' is that temple's mighty name."

He rose, as if to go, but suddenly
She caught him by the cloak and held him fast
And murmured, while a hundred smiles dissolved
In the one look that furtively she cast:
"Still on a column there your name is carved.
If this proud vaunt be earnest, as you say,
Take from among the tools there at your feet
The biggest sledge and hew the name away!"

He turned, he shot at her a keen, quick glance,
But when she sat there calmly as before,

Twisting the flax into an even thread
And gazing at the masts along the shore,
He bent him down impulsively and took
The biggest sledge; his knuckles were distended
And then grew white as wax, so hard he gripped
Upon the haft. The lifted sledge descended.
It scattered sparks from out the column's side,
And at his feet the steps were sprinkled o'er
With rain of pointed shards. From that time forth
The temple bore the artist's name no more.

Then with a shout of joy his young wife sprang
Quickly from flax and distaff to the place,
And mid the scattered fragments of his fame
She fell and clasped his knees in her embrace.
"Ah, now," she cried, "no words can tell my joy,
As we return to Naxos whence we came.
Now is my lord a thousand times more great
And 'Paestum's Temple' is his mighty name!"

The evening came. A single ship went out
With lowered sail, a Naxos flag had she.
Slowly she rowed far out against the sun
And vanished on the mirror of the sea.

A thousand years and more have passed away,
Levelling Paestum with the verdant plain,
But still the temple stands, and in its shade
The fiddlers wake Arcadian joys again.

The master's name may no man surely know,
But all who see the temple's gleaming height
May see his very soul in yonder form
And share to-day the architect's delight.
He is to me an old beloved friend
In whom I recognize in very truth
A schoolmate, brother, comrade of my youth.

ALONE BY THE LAKE

HERE spread the waters dark and deep,
Where now your ashes are lying.
Oh, tell me, my father, will you keep
The promise you made when dying?
Then rise, O wraith, from your watery grave,
Speak the word that was uttered never,
Oh, give the token that none yet gave,
If the dead may live on forever!

From the dark the surf rolls in its foam,
With a curve of white it enrings me;
A storm-cloud points to the starry dome,
As though some token it flings me;
But Fate, like the night, is hushed in gloom,
And naught in answer it brings me.

No answer for him who does not see
What you, ye stars, are outpouring.

I am one with you from eternity,
With the winds and the surf's loud roaring.
Then shine for me, stars, and guide me on,
For you are my father since *he* is gone!

HOME

I'm longing for the forest:
The pathway in the grasses,
The house that on the ness is.
What orchards hold such apples
Deep-hid from eager spying?
What grain, when zephyr dapples,
Can breathe so soft a sighing?
Where could I hope as well to slumber
When bells the hours of evening number?

Where do my memories tarry?
Where are my dead still living?
Where I, while gray and gaunt still,
With harsh, relentless finger
The years my fate are weaving?
I am a shade, and haunt still
The place where memories linger.
Oh, seek not near to hover,
Although the doors are fastened
And matted leaves now cover
The steps where winds have hastened
And dropped their withered quarry.

Let others' laughter carry,
And new floods, wilder, stronger,
Bear me, the moat o'erswelling,
To those that speak no longer.
I sit within there lonely,
Myself a memory only,—
That is my kingly dwelling.

Oh, say not that our elders,
Whose eyes are closed forever,
That those we fain would banish
And from our lives would sever,—
Say not their colors vanish
Like flowers and like grasses,
That we from hearts efface them
Like dust, when one would clear it
From ancient window-glasses.
In power they upraise them,
A host they of the spirit.
The whole white earth enshrouding,
Our thoughts too overclouding,
Whate'er our fate or fortune,
Thoughts that, like swallows crowding,
Fly home at evening duly.
A home! how firm its base is
By walls securely shielded,—
Our world—the one thing truly
We in this world have builded.

"HOW EASILY MEN'S CHEEKS ARE HOT WITH WRATH!"

How easily men's cheeks are hot with wrath!
In haste, though sadly ignorant of the art,
The many judge the individual heart.
But every heart a secret chamber hath,
Thereto a door whose lock no key will turn.
What oil the lamp within that room doth burn
No man may know. But through the keyhole stream
Pale, slender rays of light, and by their gleam
We move about and wake, and fall asleep.
It leads us; to our journey's end we keep
Along the pathway pointed by its beam.

Hugo Tigerschiöld, 1860–

THE SMELTING FURNACE

It lies there now an ingot black and cold,—
The iron which erewhile, a swift white stream,
Poured with a starry, multitudinous gleam
Out of the furnace to the furrowed mould.

So seethed a hot wave in the poet's heart,
Broke out, and in constraining form was set.
The metal, with good luck, may ring, and yet,
Alas! poor wave, how hard and cold thou art.

Still, be the metal good, mankind will have
That which within another's heart again,
Deep-heated by the flames of joy and pain,
May melt and be once more a living wave.

Karl August Tavaststjerna, 1860–1899

'T IS GROWING SO HUSHED AROUND ME

My harvest has passed the reaping,
The summer draws on to its rest:
'T is growing as hushed around me,
As hushed as if echo were sleeping,
Or slain in the mountains' breast.

My pinions of song are weary,
And I too am still at last.
'T is growing as hushed around me,
As hushed in my room, and eerie,
As if an angel had passed.

All laughter has fled in fear now,
And gone is each kindly guest.
'T is growing so hushed around me,
So hushed I can plainly hear now
My breathing short and repressed.

Then come the thoughts that have waited
Till I must hark in the gloom.
'T is growing as hushed around me,
As hushed as the moment fated
For Death to open my tomb.

They come now, one with another,
From days of my youth long sped.
'T is growing so hushed around me,
So hushed that I call my mother
And father to me in dread.

But they, both dead, cannot shield me;
The thoughts come up in a crowd.
'T is growing so hushed around me,
So hushed that at length I yield me
To them, with my forehead bowed.

They soon are my dearest treasure,
The thoughts that once could affright.
For all is so hushed around me,
So hushed that they at their pleasure
Commune with me through the night.

I live with them unrebelling,
I grieve with them and am gay.
For all is as hushed around me,
As hushed as if I were dwelling
Where life had withered away.

Gustaf Fröding, 1860–1911

THE CITY LIEUTENANT

WHO 's coming there, who 's riding there? He prances with a zest!
As gorgeous as a pennant,
'T is he, the bold lieutenant.
The girls from windows spy him,
The wistful house-maids eye him,
He sits his gallant charger like a monarch of the best.
By heaven! but he 's handsome in his snow-white vest.

He sparkles in the sunlight, ev'ry button, braid, and hook,
His polished boots are gleaming,
Their radiance out-streaming,
His spine is like an arrow,
And my! his waist is narrow.
His coat is like a picture in the latest fashion-book.
Just look at him, just look at him, just look, look, look!

He smiles — the young lieutenant — as benignly as a priest,
And twirls his blond moustaches
As through the street he flashes,
Bows to the girls politely,
Nods to the maids more slightly,
And sits his gallant charger like a monarch of the best.
By glory! but he 's handsome in his snow-white vest.

THE PRAYER-MEETING

"DEAR friends, the wages of sin is death, indeed;
His sin was great, of prayer there 's urgent need.
Young brother Anderson has gone astray,
Become a worldling, left the narrow way."

Alas! poor slaves of sin are we;
Lord, keep us from iniquity.

"Richly endowed beyond all priests he was
With heavenly grace,—our youthful Barnabas.
His gifts of exhortation, more than human,
Roused many souls, especially of women.
Pleasant as Joseph was he to behold,
And tempted too as Joseph was of old.
Oh, my young friends, ye tread on perilous ground!
Yet thought we Anderson was strong and sound,
And could from devils win the victory;
But devils have been mightier than he!"

O Ichabod, O Ichabod,
How sin doth rage in flesh and blood!

"A worthy widow for his wife he gave,
Steadfast and not too young, who well might save
The young man from the snares of Satan's guile
And fleshly lures of worldliness, the while.
A silent, earnest woman, tried and true

Of heart was she, a faithful watcher too,
Who at her post was ever diligent
And followed Anderson where'er he went.
Yet wisdom is but weakness here below,
As this assembly needeth not to know:
Our erring brother fled last night away
With Fia Bergman to America!"

Oh, sin and trouble, griefs and fears,
This world is but a vale of tears!

A SPRING-TIME SWEETHEART

(IF I HAD HAD ONE)

A GLEAM of sunlight crowned her,
As though the morn were flinging
Its gold on her that day;
Her skirt was rippling round her
Like wild-rose bushes clinging,
And lilacs white that sway.

She came, her cheeks all glowing
With the soft breeze's blowing,
And with the sulphur bath too
Of looks that neighbors gave her
From peep-hole, crack, and door;
While she gazed back in wrath too
And, blushing more than ever,
Grew prettier than before.

Her bold bright eyes gave token
That all her warmth of being
Was bursting from control;
That all the buds had broken,
And all the brooks were freeing
Their clamor in her soul.

I felt that all the spring then,
With larks upon the wing then
And wind-flowers in her traces,
Ran up with glad embraces
To seize and capture me;
And kissed me, gently laying
Her breast to mine, and saying:
"Come, love me, be near me,
And take me up and bear me
This instant home with thee!"

A LOVE-SONG

I PURCHASED my love for money,
Else ne'er had I known its might;
No less did I sing to the gay harp-string
Right sweetly of love's delight.

A dream, though it soon be vanished,
Is sweet when it answers our will;
And Eden to him who is banished
Is beauteous Eden still.

WINTER NIGHT

Riding more sedately,
Let us view the stately
Forest castle white:
Marble is the flooring;
Branches, whitely soaring,
Rise toward heaven's height.

Not a flake is stirred here,
Not a note is heard here
Of the singing storm;
Snow each nook encumbers,
And beneath it slumbers
Summer's frozen form.

Pillared ice upholds her
Bed, and death enfolds her
In this long repose,
Curtains whitely hover,
Her chill couch to cover,
Watchful pines enclose.

Moonbeams with a bitter
Cold metallic glitter
Light the lonely hall,
And from all the darkling
Corners comes a sparkling
As of diamonds all.

Stars, like tears congealing,
Stud the castle ceiling,
Rich with filigree.
Spectres weird and gloomy,
Flit across the roomy
Chamber silently.

THE OLD MOUNTAIN TROLL

The evening draws on apace now,
The night will be dark and drear;
I ought to go up to my place now,
But 't is pleasanter far down here.

Mid the peaks where the storm is yelling
'T is lonely and empty and cold;
But 't is merry where people are dwelling,
In the beautiful dale's green fold.

And I think that when I was last here
A princess wondrously fair,
Soft gold on her head, went past here;
She 'd make a sweet morsel, I swear!

The rest fled, for none dared linger,
But they turned when far off to cry,
While each of them pointed a finger:
"What a great, nasty troll! oh, fie!"

But the princess, friendly and mild-eyed,
Gazed up at me, object of fright,
Though I must have looked evil and wild-eyed,
And all fair things from us take flight.

Next time I will kiss her and hold her,
Though ugly of mouth am I,
And cradle and lull on my shoulder,
Saying: "Bye, little sweet-snout, bye!"

And into a sack I 'll get her,
And take her home with me straight,
And then at Yule I will eat her
Served up on a fine gold plate.

But hum, a-hum! I am mighty dumb,—
Who 'd look at me then so kindly?
I 'm a silly dullard—a-hum, a-hum!—
To think the thing out so blindly.

Let the Christian child go in peace, then;
As for us, we 're but trolls, are we.
She 'd make such a savory mess, then,
It is hard to let her be.

But such things too easily move us,
When we 're lonely and wicked and dumb,
Some teaching would surely improve us.
Well, I 'll go home to sleep—a-hum!

HOME-COMING

STRÖVTÅG I HEMBYGDEN

PART IV

King Lily-o'-th'-Valley so stately
He shines in the grove snow-white,
The young king sorroweth greatly,
For his frost-slain princess bright.

King Lily-o'-th'-Valley, he sinketh
His head so heavy with care,
The light of his helmet blinketh
In the hueless evening air.

A shroud of cobweb covers
The form so fair in death,
While soft flower-incense hovers
And fills the woods with its breath.

From the birch-tops mournfully swinging,
From the wind's green bower on high
Wee songs of lament are ringing,
Till the woods are filled with a sigh.

Through the glades a messenger beareth
The sigh to each whispering leaf,
Till all the wide forest heareth
Of Lily-o'-th'-Valley's grief.

IDEALISM AND REALISM

I'm sick of this new-fangled schism,
This earth-and-stars dissension:
Idealism and realism,
Our brain-devised contention.

'T is Art when dust is painted right,
They find with false conclusion.
A heavenly vision, fair and bright,
Forsooth, is cloud-illusion.

But though the box be gold, yet snuff
Is snuff—so one supposes;—
And though the vase be cracked and rough,
Still roses will be roses.

PRINCE ALADDIN OF THE LAMP

The luckless Prince Aladdin
Has now no lamp, alas!
He feels beneath his mantle
Where heretofore it was.
His ring he seeks amain, too,
And finds it not again, too,
For now no ring he has.
The mighty Prince Aladdin
Has lost his wits, no doubt,
And blindly gropes about.

He importunes the ether:
"Come, fairy castle mine,
With pearls and rubies gleaming;
Ye halls, in radiance beaming,
With white and gold a-shine!
And you, ye sprites, fulfil now
This task with heedful care
And bring me to my will now
Princess Bedrulbudour,
The moon-mild maiden rare!"

So reels along the street here
Amid the thickest press
The mighty Prince Aladdin
In ragged helplessness:
"Come here and see the fun,
Just listen to his pother;
The crazy tailor's son
Thinks he's the Sultan's brother!"

"Ye tailors and ye beggars,
Ye know not sprites at all.
One only needs to beckon,
One only needs to call:
'Come, castle, come, come here!'"
He fixes then his eyes on
The blue far-off horizon
Until it shall appear.
The common people sneer:

"Your castle 's in the moon there;
Fly up and you 'll be soon there!"

Alack! the lamp's poor owner
May never more have rest,
Nor may he trust his fortune
Who once the ring possessed.
He feels that now no tittle
Of his good fortune brittle
Is left to him secure;
Though 't is but doubts defeat him,
These childish errors cheat him
Till nothing may endure.

. . .

The lamp is high creative power,
The chiefest strength of man;
The magic ring is faith's rich dower,
Wherewith he all things can.

LITTLE JOE–JOHNNY

LELLE KARL-JOHAN

"Little Joe-Johnny,—
Is n't he bonny?
Takes after mother, the good little dear!
Look how he blows now
In 's fist his nose now
Just as his pa does,—Joe-Johnny, come here!

"Look! how politely
He bows, and how brightly
Shine the long curls of our little Joe-Johnny.
Hoho! my sonny
Has all the manners of grown folk, you see.
Yes, and he 's able to
Quote from the Bible too,
Well as the dean, priest, and sexton, all three.

"Tell me, Joe-Johnny, what was it that Moses —
Look how your nose is! —
Promised the Jews in the words of the law,
If they would honor their pa and their ma?

"Now you shall hear why our little Joe-Johnny
Should be a priest when he 's grown a bit more,"
So said his mother, caressing Joe-Johnny.
But — awful to tell! —
When she was done, he
Swore
Stoutly and gruffly: "Oh, ma, go to hell!"

THE DANCE BY THE ROADSIDE

They danced by the roadside on Saturday night,
And the laughter resounded to left and to right,
With shouts of "Hip, hip!" and of "Hey!"
Nils Utterman, famed as a queer old freak,
Sat there and made his accordion squeak
With doodely, doodely, day!

There was Cottage Bess,—whose attractions are many,
She is pretty and slim, though she has n't a penny,
She 's brimful of mischief and fun.
There was Christie,—the wild, independent young lassie!—
And Biddy of Finnthorpe, and Tilly, and Cassie,
And rollicking Meg o' the Run.

There was Pete o' the Ridge and Gus o' the Rise,—
Who are nimble at tossing a girl to the skies
And at catching her when she comes down.
There was Phil o' the Croft and Nick o' the Flume,
And Tommy the Soldier, and Jimmy the Groom,
And Karl-John of Taylortown.

They danced as with bodies of tow set afire,
All jumping like grasshoppers higher and higher,
And heel it rang sharp upon stone.
The coat-tails they fluttered, the aprons they flew,
And braids were a-flapping and skirts flung askew,
While the music would whimper and drone.

Then in birch, or in alder, or hazel thicket
There was whispering light as the chirp of a cricket
From the depths of the darkness near.
Over stock, over stone, there was flight and pursuing,
And under green boughs there was billing and cooing—
"If you want me, come have me right here!"

Over all lay the twinkling, star-lovely night;
In the wood-bordered bay a shimmery light
Fell soft on the waves as they broke.
A breeze, clover-laden, was borne from the meadow,
And a whiff from the firs and the pines that o'ershadow
The hills with their resinous cloak.

A fox lent his voice to the din of the crew,
And out of the brambles an owl cried "Oohoo!"
But they heard not, they heeded not, they.
"Oohoo!" from Goat Mountain the echo cried,
And to Utterman's doodling in turn replied
With a doodely, doodely, day!

PASTORAL

VALLARELÅT

Hark to the cowbells, hark how the singing
Strays down the meadow at evening fall!
Cows low their answer and quicken the swinging
Stride of their pace at the milkmaid's call.

O'er heath and moorland the shrill notes flow:
"Co', Lily—co', Lily—co', Lily, co'!"
Echoes, awakening, northward go,
Cliffs all replying
Softly the dying
"Co', Lily—co', Lily—co'!"

Falls now, now rises the cowbell's vibration,
Till all is hushed in the valley beneath,
Still are the woods, half-asleep in their station.
Only the wandering
Call goes meandering
Near and afar over moorland and heath.

Night comes apace with the sun's fading glimmer,
See, on the lake, how the vapor trails!
Shades grow more solid, and longer, and dimmer,
Quickly the dark o'er the forest prevails.

Spruces and pine-trees now sleep in the shadow,
Dull grows the rush of the cataract's play,
Faintly the voices recede from the meadow,
Wander, and scatter, and die far away.

A POOR MONK OF SKARA

My life 's on the wane and I 'm spent with work,
A wretched and ignorant renegade clerk,
A runaway fled from his Order afar, a
Brother condemned by the chapter of Skara.

I 'm now but an old and broken man,
To Satan consigned by the Church's ban
For murder and obstinate heresy,
And doomed by the King to outlawry.

When Lars the Canon I smote in wrath,
The brethren hastened to dog my path.
They hunted me like a wolf in the wood;
But all that they found was my monkish hood.

A surly and obstinate monk was I,
And many a tankard on the sly
I drew from the abbot's well-filled tun,
And sinned most vilely with a nun.
My muscles were iron; I'd frequent
The village inn where the wastrels went,
I joined with a harlot and fiddler crew,
And Lars Canonicus I slew.
But misery came of those evil days,
In a foreign land I berued my ways,
Eating husks whence the swine had turned,
Like the man in a tale I learned.

I was not quite in the devil's clutch,—
Of good in man's nature there 's always much,—
But I had a stormy road to go,
As when the blasts of the tempest blow
A fisherman's boat on a rugged shore
And leave it there broken and battered sore,
Although for rift and wound
Some help may yet be found.

They shut me up in a dismal cell,
Then drove me forth in the waste to dwell,
Like beasts they hunted me here and there—

Like beasts that fain would catch and tear.
They taught me hatred, sin, and deceit,
While bitterness was my drink and meat.
I felt myself doomed to death and damnation,
In Satan's power beyond salvation;
Condemned to hell forever and aye,
I lusted now to burn and slay.
But the sigh of the woods, the voice of the stream,
The beauty of morn's awakening gleam,
And the weeping autumn rain,—
These taught me love again.

And dew, the brooks, and the bird's fresh song,
The flowers, the elk as he bounded along,
And the squirrel's joy in the top of the fir
Set life and hope in my veins astir,
Gave self-respect once more
And taught a rich new lore.

It is not true, the once-learned story
That some are shut out from heaven's glory,
For every soul may enter free;
Not as sheep and goats, but alike are we.
There is no good man who is quite as good
As he thinks himself in presumptuous mood,
Nor is there a sinner so foul within
As he feels when racked by the pangs of sin.
Then do not boast, my brother,
Nor chide and judge another.

And he who sits so mighty at Rome,
For all of me, must abide his doom,
With doctor, monk, and pastor
And titled priest and master.
The noble who sits so proud in his tower,
He too must submit to sorrow's power;
On dukes and kings dread sorrow falls,
Yea, emperors its might appalls;
We all may go astray,
So wherefore chide for aye?

Thus o'er the earth the people roam,
And not a man knows whence we come,
And none knows whither the way will lead,
And none knows what is life, indeed.
And yet beyond clouds of strife
There dawns a far better life;
Where no one is evil, no one good,
But as brothers all we breast the flood,
Each lending each a hand
While struggling to the strand.

Though the world has robbed me of honor here,
Though I sit alone in the forest drear,
And better days may never be mine,
Yet I 'll not grieve, I 'll not repine:
The birds mount gaily toward the skies,
With every morn the sun doth rise,
The birch-tree buds anew,—
Why should not I hope, too?

Perhaps, when a thousand years have flown
Like clouds over cottage and castle blown,
A rider may wend through the forest here,
May tether his horse to a birch-tree near,
May open the door, peep in and see
The outlaw's den and its misery,
And read this wretched scrawl if he will,
On parchment writ with a wild bird's quill.

Then will he say: "So long ago
Did this man learn what we all now know,
Foreseeing the age that upon this earth
After long, long strife has been brought to birth?—
And yet was he of yore a
Poor banished Monk of Skara!"

"BEHOLD, THIS DREAMER COMETH!"

Behold, this Dreamer cometh! (they said:)
Turning toward us his downcast head.

On lonely paths he wanders far;
He is not as we others are.

He dreams that—curse his lying dream!—
Sun, moon, and stars all bow to him.

He is our father's dearest son:
Come, let us slay him and have done!

AN OLD ROOM

THERE is an old low room I love;
Dark broken plaster spreads above.
Near-by is heard the muffled tone
Of roaring sluice and saw-mill's drone.
The furniture 's of ancient mould,
Ample, and stoutly made,
With curving legs of white and gold,
And flower-enwrought brocade.

Out of a corner, dim and swart
Stares a bronze bust of Bonaparte,
Who with his white horse rides in all
The pale engravings on the wall;
Through Ulm and Austerlitz they go,
At Beresina too,
From victory to overthrow
At bloody Waterloo.

Karl-Johan gazes, white with dust,
Upon the Emperor's gloomy bust.
His royal nose is thin and bent,
His lips, though tight and reticent,
Prepared to hurl forth accents dire
In thundering cascade,
Hot with the heart's volcanic fire,
A mighty gasconade.

A book-case old of curly birch,
Where massive carvings darkly perch,
Holds many a poet of romance.
We see as o'er the backs we glance
Per Atterbom with all his line,
Tegnér, an honored guest;
Stagnelius, mystic and divine,
With Almqvist and the rest.

A fly is buzzing on the sill,
The clock's long pendulum is still;
The languorous breath of jasmine pours
From blooming bushes out-of-doors,
And pungent from a near-by vase
Comes scent of rose-leaf sear,
While glints the bright prismatic glass
Of crystal chandelier.

Between the windows there appears
A spinet dumb these sixty years,
But I can picture some one there
In straw-hued skirt upon the chair,
With corkscrew curls and shawl of lace,—
The form is my great-aunt's.
Pale orange is her faded face,
And dark her wide-eyed glance.

As languishing as poppy-dreams,
She sings with tender tone, and seems

To sway her head in time to words
That tell of love and Persian birds;
Of nightingales that never cease,
And violets' perfumed sighs,
Of roses' pain and lilies' peace
In that far paradise.

The chamber fills with sweetest scent
Of ambergris and flowers blent,
With down of flitting butterflies,
And such tinsel fooleries;
Till dainty little fairies dance
On tiptoe through the room,
And spirit-birds of old romance
Call through the charmèd gloom.

DREAMS IN HADES

I

Once,—though a lethargy oppressed my brain,—
Lying and brooding, eyelids both ajar,
I watched the candle's pale and flickering light
Burn low into the socket, flare again,
Glimmer and die. And then I saw a star
That shimmered faintly from the depths of night.

The moon shone in, but with so chill a beam
Methought 't was like St. Elmo's fire in bloom
Upon some mast o'er darkened waves below.

Like phosphor-wood or like the moss-fed gleam
Of Will-o'-the-Wisp, or when above a tomb
On St. John's Eve we see a fitful glow.

The air was like to earth which, thinning, tends
To rise and float as vapor; it was dim,
And peopled thick with weird and spectral things.
'T was as when light with darkness meets and blends,
A druid sheen, unnatural and grim,
Such as an ancient tale of witchcraft brings.

Dark forms I saw in that strange atmosphere,
Dead races of mankind that seemed to bide
With trustful expectation, rows on rows,
Until the light of morning should appear;
Silently there they slumbered side by side,
Layer by layer in their dream-repose.

Dull as a sea-surge momently increased,
I heard the hum of myriad voices rise,
Muffled as tones from muted harp-string sped;
A sea of murmurs rushed from west to east,
Ascending, falling,—questions and replies,—
And rolled like swelling billows to my bed.

II

Through the sounds I heard there
Ran a rhythmic sway,
But in every word there
Deepest meaning lay:—

Many a mystic token,
Many a searching tone
In the least word spoken,
With a sigh 't was gone.

What my cold and clever
Mind would fain have caught,
Foiled my best endeavor,
Was but harsh and naught.
Grief would seize impulsive
On those shades in death,
And a throe convulsive
Rack and stop their breath.
Of that dream the trophy
Hades left with me
Was a crabbed strophe
Limping wearily.

III

Clamor of Albion's harp-strings,
Murmurs of song from the Northland.
Beowulf's story or Fingal's
Heard I or faintly perceived there
Sounding in echoes through Hades,
Dim and yet wondrously lovely.

Fables of Anglian monarchs,
Legends of witches from Denmark,
Sad-hearted Gaelic traditions,
Lays of the Grail and of Merlin

Filled mine ears full with the strains of
Heathenish bards from aforetime.

Half-Christian gnostic magicians,
Wise men who dwell in the Eastland;
Seers with druidical knowledge
Such as men seek in the hidden
Depths of philosopher's stones,—
These filled with visions my chamber.

IV

I saw a sleeper's
Chin uplifted,
From which a black beard
O'er silver mail
Flowed soft and graceful.
Above the collar
Arose a visage
Proud and pale.

I saw a singer's
Mournful forehead,
Dark hair encircling
The features all,
And vision-haunted
Were lips that erstwhile
Had sung perchance in
King Arthur's hall.

I saw his death-dim
Eyes unclosing

To seek for someone
He found not there;
Once more he closed them,
And in that moment
The apparition
Dissolved in air.

But long thereafter
I heard soft accents
Telling melodious
Their gloomy tale,
A half-forgotten
Minstrel saga
From some far Welshland
Or English dale.

. . .

Did I not love a maiden
Was kind and fair to see?
Did I not sleep, and, dreaming, lay
My head upon her knee,
While the red sun behind the oaks
Was sinking mistily?

Gave she not me a bridal night
Graced by the stars' pale sheen,
As o'er us leafy branches swayed
Their canopy of green,
While willows waved and ripples beat
The reeds and rocks between?

Her lord's gold chain, she gave me—
Yea, all she gave me now,—
She fitted it about my head
And wound it o'er my brow;
Her soul she gave, and for my sake
She broke her holy vow.

Long did we drink in secret
Of carnal love our fill,
What time with melancholy smile
We loved through good and ill;
We loved in sin and rapture,
In shame and joy loved still.

But now I hear a monk's voice
That speaks with accents dread:
"Fair is this life to look upon,
The cheeks of love are red;
But now thy loved one's hue is pale,
Osviva now is dead.

"Osviva now shall slumber
Full long in cold repose,
For slumber, dreams, and death at last,—
All these she freely chose,
And, unrepentant, never
To heaven her spirit goes."

Monk, it is writ in legends,
By sibyls it is said

That, when the latest autumn
Its latest leaf has shed,
The Great Deliverer visits
The city of the dead.

If ages have passed o'er me
Since I was dead and gone,
The day then is approaching,
I feel it soon will dawn,
When the Delivering Spirit
Will free us every one!

. . .

Like seas in motion
When the winds drive them,
Like a wave speeding,
The whisper went,
To tell of dawn in
The night of Hades,
A mystic message
Of wonderment.

Soon sank the murmur
Deep in the darkness,
Where on dream-pinions
My spirit soared,
Then the strange promise
Rose up before me,—
In mocking vision,
In mystic word.

Over the features
Fell for a moment
A gleam of brighter
Light than before,
But it was soft as
A ray of moonlight
Falling from Life's night
Through Hades' door.

"SIGH, SIGH, RUSHES!"

Sigh, *sigh, rushes!*
Moan, waves, moan!
Can ye not tell where Ingalill,
Sweet Ingalill has gone?

She cried like a wounded duck as she sank in the sea—
When spring last was green, that would be.

She had wakened the wrath of the towns-folk there,
An evil wrath that she might not bear.

She wakened their wrath by her goods and gold
And the love she bore for her lover bold.

With a thorn they pierced an eyeball through,
With mud they defiled a lily's dew.
Then sing, oh, sing your song of grief,
Ye little waves, for my heart's relief!
Sigh, sigh, rushes!
Moan, waves, moan!

MOUNTAIN TROLLS

"WELL, you may believe me or may not believe me;
But 't was this way it was, and the devil may have me
If 't was n't a troll-pack that caught me one night.
We had charge of a furnace in Westerly Moor,
And the night was nigh finished, the clock stood at four,
When the racket began and Peer jumped up in fright.
It crashed round the peaks and it roared in the valley
Like bellowing oxen up yonder," said Ole.

"They tramped and they stamped from all points of the compass,
And 't was funny, but God! it was trolls made the rumpus.
Like the big church at Bogen they looked, as they rose
Through the trees, which resounded with thunder and thud;
There was crackling and groaning all over the wood,
For the firs were like straws to such lubbers as those.
And Peer he crouched under the root of a tree
And I by a big pile of charcoal," said he.

"Like the clashing of iron the noise of them rang,
For they 'd arms like steam-hammers, had some of the gang;
And their fists were like rocks that the old giants tumbled;

Some had mouths like a mine-shaft, and added to that,
Some had thatch like the roof of a shed for a hat;
And some sent out fire like a furnace that rumbled;
Some had snouts big as iron steam-cranes in their head,—
By golly! it was a bit scary," he said.

"They sat round the furnace and roasted huge steaks
Of pig-iron, and made themselves broth out of spikes,
And ate ploughs as we 'd munch upon chicken or lamb.
Then all round the furnace the trolls began dancing
So it looked just like houses and churches a-prancing,
And it sounded like thunder, the clash and the slam.
I 've been down to town and seen many a spree,
But I never saw dance up to that one," said he.

"And as I lay there like a bundle of clouts,
Came a troll up with one of the ugliest snouts
And sniffed me and turned my poor body around.
'Look sharp here, look out if you don't smell a rat!
Here 's a bit of old meat,' said the troll; but with that
Of a sudden the sun had come up with a bound.
'The sun 's here,' says I, 'and the east is all red.'
They snorted and took to their heels then," he said.

"It was something terrific to hear the hills rumble,
As the pack of them rushed to the north in a jumble
And scurried away all together up north.
Still the huts seemed to fight from the way they were
shaking,

For ore-house and coal-house and smithy were quaking,
And as if turning cartwheels, they swayed back and forth.
Yes, trolls hate the sun just as I should fear truly
To lie or to draw the long bow," finished Ole.

Ola Hansson, 1860–

FROM "SONGS OF HOME"

I

Dull and muffled now the tumult of the city comes to me:
Wagons rattle, hoofs are thudding, amid laughs and shouts of glee.
Through the open window pouring, floods the sultry summer air,
And I see the sunlight shining, and the heavens, how blue and fair!

On the table just before me, gray and blurred, the paper lies,
And I look its columns over thoughtlessly with hurried eyes.
Dear old village names are in it, and to me the pictures come
Of the people as they read it in the cottages at home.

By the window sits the grandsire in his leather-covered chair,
While through darkened panes the daylight faintly falls and lingers there.
How the old man spells the fine print through his goggles rimmed with brass,
And the pages crisply rustle as his smoothing fingers pass!

And I see around the table how the farm-girls read it, too,
By the faint and pallid glimmer of the lamp-light when he's through,
Arms about each other's necks the while their fingers rough and brown
Roam the gray and crumpled pages, line by line each column down.

And outside I see the walls shine white beneath their mossy thatch,
And the light green of the chestnuts and the elms I faintly catch,
And I hear the myriad plant-life growing on the earth's wide breast,
While the vernal May-day softly sinks into its evening rest.

And I feel a subtle perfume from that dingy page upcoil,
Sweet as scent of budding flowers, strong as scent of field and soil.
And a rich, pulsating music seems to billow through it all,
In whose quiet swell is mingled song of lark and lap-wing call.

Oscar Levertin, 1862–1906

SOLOMON'S HYMN TO THE MOON

Crescent moon, again you 're filling
All the sable heavens with light,
Urging the sad poet on to sing,
Spilling
Beams like silver fishes bright
Till they flood the depths of every spring.
Night is drowned in bridal splendor.
Like a charmèd bird the tender
Heart bounds high, 'twixt grief and glee.
Garden sphinxes leer at me.

Blood you sway and billows roaring,
Breasts of women you control,
And you sting the sleeper in his trance,
Pouring
Melancholy on the soul.
In your beams the fool is fain to dance.
In your spark-rain serpents wallow.
Watch-dogs lift their howlings hollow.
Hot hands pray imploringly.
Garden sphinxes leer at me.

Gray my forehead, I forget not;
I have known the fatal snare,
Nature's lure of silent restlessness.

Let not,
Moon, your cold majestic stare
Dupe the heart with longing and distress!
Rouse no more the blood, the ocean,
Stir not women with emotion!
Weary, evermore I see
Garden sphinxes leer at me.

Sink, O stupor of delight, now
On the world, forever freeze
Woman's breast upon her lover's mouth,
Blight now
Love's fair shrine amid the trees!
Drink the font of life and leave a drouth!
By the empty pools lie sleeping
Lovers in the moonlight steeping,
Happy that no more they see
Yonder shapes that leer at me.

BEATRICE

Like the first swallow in the spring returning,
Fly through the night-blue air to yon far place,
My song, and gently unto her whose face
Is hid from me, oh, tell my sad life's yearning.

Fly, song, thou only know'st beyond forgetting
My bosom's loneliness
And grief that burns in springtime's fairest hours,

And thou alone dost know the fiery fretting
Of this my keen distress.
The sun no longer gleams through forest bowers.
Through misted panes I see how evening lowers.
Night soon will spread her starry tent on high,
And with a faltering wing my dream will fly
Where shadows do not tell of night returning.

For there the sunlight ever is descending
On groves of cypress blue,
There ever glow the flame-red beams of even
On fruit-trees under snowy blossoms bending,
And splash with sun-bright hue
The lilies that beneath yon boughs have thriven.
But that land lies beyond the rim of heaven,
The pale horizon bounds it like a wall.
Yon garden where the cool, blue shadows fall
Lies evermore beyond mine eyes' discerning.

But, song, do thou, on whose transparent pinions
No bonds of clay have might,
Pass o'er the skyey tracts within my vision,
Directing unto fancy's fair dominions
Thy summer-gleaming flight
To where within some fruit-tree grove Elysian
Dwells Beatrice. Oh, let her know thy mission
From me who tarry in the dark sad world;
While from the boughs the petals white and curled
Fall on her dress, reveal my spirit's yearning.

What is eternal in my life's commotion,
What's wingèd in my thought,
All rays of sunlight through my senses streaming,
Are fibres from the web of my devotion
To her. 'T was she who taught
All the sad passion of my poet-dreaming
Made into song by twilight's pensive gleaming,
When evening's dark regret weighed hard on me—
Tell it not thus, but sweetly as may be,
O song, thou swallow with the spring returning.

THE ARTIST

You, O lonely mountain-peak,
Only you have known me.
Unto you my heart may speak
Though no friends will own me.
I'm by other joys possessed,
Other griefs o'ertake me.
They who would be tenderest
In my need forsake me.
They but judged by what they saw,
Missed my inner nature;
Took for mine *their* spirits' law,
Failed to read one feature.
Mountain-cold toward every one
I, when warm they thought me;
Cold I seemed, when to a sun
Fiery passions wrought me.

Fouled with scorn by all and each
Was my love's pure fountain—
Vainly to the dalesmen preach
Dwellers of the mountain.
Hail, O mountain solitude,
Sunlit, icy-crested!
Lone too is my artist mood
Where the light hath rested.
I have visions none can see:
Stars o'er lakes that shimmer;
Ships of dream glide under me,
White sails all a-glimmer.
Close to God's mysterious fane,
Rapt in soul and free there,
I may quaff the blue disdain
Of the crystal ether.

AN OLD NEW-YEAR'S SONG

Stephen ostler now doth drive
To the spring his horses five,
Clear the night is glowing.
Jesus placed them in his guard,
And has set within the yard
Life's pure waters flowing.

Hark! the clock strikes twelve, and out
To the courtyard throngs the rout;
Deep the snow has drifted.

Heaven's vault is high and blue,
Where the moon and wee stars too
Shining are uplifted.

Love's bold charger leads the way,
Gallant as the sun in May,
Decked as for a wedding;
Bridle all of flowers fair,
Saddle wrought of rose-leaves rare
Sewn with silver threading.

Fortune's mare neighs lustily,
Shoes and trappings gold has she,
Well she knows hard riding;
Seeks the land of Dream-Desire
And the sunset's golden fire
In the west subsiding.

Slowly after Fortune's steed
Stumbles out the nag of Need,
Drab and melancholy.
Hungry he and hollow-eyed,
Seeks for chaff on every side
As he limps on slowly.

Mid the willows lingering,
Like a dark and spectral thing,
Sorrow's horse moves onward.

Stonily his gaze is sent
Upward, but his head is bent
Ever deeply downward.

Last appears with mane of gray,
Like old age's final day
On the sky encroaching,
With a sudden beat of hoof,
Like to earth on coffin-roof,
Death's pale horse approaching.

Stephen ostler now doth drive
To the spring his horses five;
Bright the water shimmers.
Torches burn in heaven's hall.
Gracious Jesus, help us all
Now that New Year glimmers!

ITHACA

Like to a stranger in a foreign strand
I've dreamed—God knows how oft.
Now I go home. Already, far from land
I hear the storm aloft.
To unknown realms beyond the pillared gates
Of mighty Heracles
I steer me where the isle of islands waits
Enshrined in sapphire seas.

There, sunlit in yon ocean's broad expanse,
Lies Ithaca, mine isle,
Where the white-arching boughs of fruit-trees glance,
And billows die the while
Mid sedge, as dies a harp's faint evening song,
Love-muffled, on the ear.
There, be the voyage ne'er so hard and long,
My vessel I would steer.

For there will stand the cool white marble house
In which I fain would dwell.
Above will sigh the silver poplar boughs
That guard while I rest well.
Ye waves of life, I 'm weary of your foam!
Dim forces rise in me
Urging toward Ithaca, my heart's true home,
My bright isle in the sea.

On the way homeward absently I hear
The noise of life's alarm,
As though I heard a stranger who came near
And took me by the arm.
Brothers, though still I walk here as do ye,
Of ills here unafraid,
Smiling, I greet the future's mystery,
For my account is made.

More strongly meanwhile do I feel the urge
Of music every day,

The evening echo of the beating surge
Within mine island's bay.
Leaned o'er the waves, I watch as in a spell
The dolphins flashing past.
No isle 's in sight, but almond perfumes tell
That I 'm approaching fast.

Still will I bear as much as any man
May bear of misery,
For this I know, that no one ever can
Tell my heart's Odyssey.
My trifling griefs and joys — their tinsel gleams
As dust to dust I fling,
Now that my boat nears Ithaca, my dreams'
Bright island of the spring.

MONICA

Monica, mother, the leaves are falling;
Stripped by the scythe, the fields lie drear.
The chill of winter's first breath appalling
Strikes on my heart in the forest sere.
Heavy each thought and weary each limb,
Endless the home-leading roadway dim.

Dumbly now by the hearth you 're bending,
Red is the woof in your shuttle's play,
Red, too, the glow that the fire is sending
On wrinkled cheek and on hair grown gray.

Sharp is the gust of the evening air
While you weave the cloth for your son to wear.

Closed are your lips, for speech too weary,
Listless your eyes that strain in the gloom.
Shadows, gathering ever more dreary,
Sink like a weight on the silent room;
Burnt logs tumble down one by one
While ceaseless you weave for your wayward son.

Monica, mother, with bitter measure
Is brimmed each draught that this life affords.
In man, in woman, I find no pleasure,
My lips are sated with kisses and words.
Far from life's road is my heart's desire;
I long for home and your failing fire.

Eyes that betray as they smile their caressing
I 'd leave for yours with their fading glow;
Yours is the hand I would choose for pressing,
Yours that is withered and wasted so;
No song delights me except the sound
Of your whirring loom on its monotone round.

All earthly longings and lures that cheat me
Die of their din at length in my breast.
I would go home, on a stool I 'd seat me
Close by your chair, and take my rest,
While autumn winds bore the stifling reek
Out of the ashes against my cheek.

So, till your hand has fulfilled the weaving
Of my life's fabric, I 'd sit aloof.
The warp is my life of gloom and grieving,
But through it all runs your love's red woof;
Like a mother's love, the strong red thread
Abides in the hour of death and dread.

Monica, mother, the fields are wasted;
Frost-arrows flew, and their green host fell.
The leaves at winter's rude breath have hasted
Earthwards, to moulder in wood and dell.
Heavy each thought and weary each limb,
Endless the home-leading roadway dim.

Erik Axel Karlfeldt, 1864–

TIME OF WAITING

Sweetest is the time of waiting,
Time of floods, of buds dilating,
May has naught so captivating
As a clearing April noon.
Let not miry paths befool you,
Then the dampened woods will cool you,
And you 'll hear the leaves' low croon.
Not in summer joys I 'd wallow,
Give me but the blades that follow
Melting snows in pine-dark hollow,
And the earliest thrush's tune.

Best the lover's time of waiting,
Of betrothal ere the mating,
Spring has naught so captivating
As a secret sweetheart fair.
Seldom with her, soon asunder,
He will dream the strange wild wonder
Life so soon for him may bear.
Golden fruit, let others shake it,
Mine be not the hand to take it,
For my garden I 'd forsake it
When the trees are budding there.

PRELUDE

TO "FRIDOLIN'S PLEASURE-GARDEN"

My muse dwelleth not on Parnassus,
Her home is on Purse-Maker's Nest.
Like sunset the cheek of the lass is,
When eve soothes the valley to rest.

May poets be crowned but with laurel!
May not Dalecarlia spare
A wreath with which no one need quarrel
To lay on a bard's flowing hair?

Your Pegasus, haughty of form, is
A noble and excellent steed,
But one I'd prefer in a storm is
A colt of our own mountain breed.

With iron spurs gleaming and jangling
We stumble through thicket and brake,
Like the grouse-cock my lyre is a-twangling,
And oh, what a clatter we make!

For the seven-hued bridge, o'er which passes
The bard to the halls of the blest,
Gilds the myrtle-clad heights of Parnassus,
And the rowans of Purse-Maker's Nest.

SONG AFTER HARVEST

Fridolin dances free,
And full of sweet wine is he,—
Of the berry's juice, and the wheat-field's dower,
And the whirl of the waltz-melodie.
With the tails of his long coat over his arm
He dances full many a partner warm,
Till she leans on his breast like a drooping flower,
Overcome by his manly charm.

Fridolin dances free,
He is filled with the memory
Of his sire and grandsire who danced there long
Before to that old melodie.
Ye sleep now, ye sires, on the festival night,
And stilled is the hand that could fiddle with might,
For your life—like your day—is a murmuring song
Which echoes a wistful delight.

But Fridolin dances free,—
Your son, and a brave lad he;
He can talk in the peasant style with a churl,
And in Latin to men of degree.
His scythe goes sharp through the harvest's gold,
He is proud of the store that his granaries hold,
Toward the moon's red saucepan he tosses his girl
Like a man of your stalwart mould.

IMAGINED HAPPINESS

From a poverty-shadowed life
In the night of my lone distress
I sing unto you, my hoped-for wife,
My treasure of queenliness.
I paint in my hours of dreaming
With flying brush, till the lines
Of your haloed features are gleaming
On a background of shadowy pines.

With pink of the cranberry bright
Your wistful mouth I've expressed,
With soft mosses red and white
Have hinted your throat and breast.
From birch-leaves in autumn turning
I caught the right gold for your hair,
But your smile has a touch of yearning
I never could capture there.

You dwell in a splendor of light,
You float as on music of strings,
But you love the sigh of the wood's deep night
And the song that the wild thicket sings.
From empty display that o'erpowers,
From pleasures that cloy without cease,
You long for the grasses, the flowers,
For silence, oblivion, and peace.

When your will is on fire some day
And doubt may no more restrain,
You 'll come of yourself on the fateful way
You ne'er can retrace again.
I sing, I exult at the meeting,
My glad heart leaps on its throne;
We melt at the passionate greeting
For all of our lives into one.

From a poverty-shadowed life
In the night of my lone distress
I proudly cry: "Would you be my wife,
Then count not the more and less!"
Your beauty in that sweet hour
Will richly adorn our nest,
For happiness is your dower,
Your morning-gift is rest.

IN THE ELK SEASON

He comes to the oat-field each night to feed,
From the croft you see him plainly,—
The mighty beast, that with toilsome heed
I 've followed all day so vainly.

All else is asleep in the full moon's glow,
But with hot hunter's lust I 'm waking
Behind the hedge where the willows grow,
No breath the silence is breaking.

Then he steps from the pines with a stately mien
As though from his autumn castle,
He strides like a monarch with gait serene,
The leaves round his antlers rustle.

Through the misty wavering moonlight stream
I watch him peacefully roam there;
Fantastic of form, as though like a dream
Of the forest primeval he 'd come there.

He seems to me now far more than a beast,
Yea, more than a human creature;
A prouder lord of the wilds at least,
A first-born son of Dame Nature.

Again my hunter's blood runs hot,
But I pause ere I pull the trigger:
I have not the heart to send a shot
At that moonlit majestic figure.

To win such a prize by fraud were a shame,
So back through the thicket of willow
I creep. To-morrow we 'll start our game
As usual, my fine fellow.

We 'll then play fair. Your legs are good,
And you will be finely started;
If I can but catch you in the wood,
I shall not be moonshine-hearted.

And if but my trembling hand be sure
When I aim at your mighty shoulder,
My shot will ring over heath and moor,
And my horn from boulder to boulder.

I 'll gloat on each prong of the antlered head
Which proudly you once could carry,
And glad o'er the dewy hills I 'll tread
At eve with my royal quarry.

THE VIRGIN MARY

FROM "POEMS ON DALECARLIAN PAINTINGS"

She 's coming down the meadow from the hall of Sjugareby,
A little maid with cheeks as fair as almond flowers to see,
As almond flowers and wild-rose flowers where town may never be,
Or road where dust of traffic soils and smothers.
What pathway have you followed, that your cheek was never burned?
What have you dreamed, O Mary, what has your bosom learned,
That your blood burneth not as that of others?
Around your hair uncovered a strange effulgence glows,
Your brow is like the crescent moon that beameth,
When over Meadow Mountain all white and bent it goes
And through the leafy blackthorn stems it gleameth.

The cooling winds of even set the columbine asway,
The lilies' yellow bells ring in the peaceful holy day;
The kids are hardly bleating, the colts will hardly neigh,
From nest and grove come faintest chirpings only.
And now the young Dalecarlian lads and girls go pair by pair;
But you the flower of all of them, whom each lad longs to wear,
Why have you come to ponder here so lonely?
You look as would a virgin, by her first communion stirred,
Who on Whitsunday night her watch is keeping
While thinking of the Bread of Life and all that she has heard
Until her heart with ecstasy is leaping.

Turn back, turn back, O Mary, for dark is evening's brow,
Your mother must be anxious that alone you wander now;
For you are slight and fragile as a slender willow bough,
And in yon wood the grim bear prowleth surely.
The rose you hold as token, though, will keep you even there,
'T was brought you by an angel from a sacred garden fair:
And you can tread on snake or thorn securely.
Yea, that long sunbeam stretching down so radiantly bright
O'er Silja Lake from glowing towers of even —
In truth you might be passing on your bridal way to-night
Along that narrow trembling bridge to heaven.

DREAMS AND LIFE

I would that I were a mighty man,
Who ruled my kingdom and had men dig
Around my castle a moat so big
No long-legged mischief the space could span.
I would I could spread a noble feast
Where each hungry fellow should be my guest,
With all of the lads who were bold and gay.
And there it should always be said outright
That black was black and that white was white,
And life should be praised to the very last day.

I would that I were a valiant man.
Give me a steed and a saddle, O Fate,
A warrior's sword, a just debate,
And a foeman to conquer if I can!
And if I 'm not named on the triumph day,
When the troops come back from the finished fray,
Among those who fell where the fight raged hot—
'T is all the same, if I fought without fear.
A man may advance though he be in the rear,
And slumber full soundly, although forgot.

But I 'm not a man in these dreams remote.
No other lances than words I wield,
In poesy's tourney I bear a shield,
But the rest of the time wear an every-day coat.

I would I might sing on the sun-kissed heights,
Yet I dwell at home with the lesser lights,
Where Memory sings like a nightingale.
The neighbors no less may hear me rejoice;
When there 's air in the lungs and a ring in the voice,
A song may ascend though it sound from the dale.

A VAGRANT

"Who are you and whence do you come?"
I will not and cannot reply,
I am no man's son and I have no home,
No son shall I leave when I die.
A stranger from far am I.

"What 's your religion, what is your creed?"
I only know this: I know naught.
And if I have missed the right path, indeed
My error I 've never been taught.
But God first and last I have sought.

"How is your life?" It is storm and pain,
A hard, endless battle-drive;
A glow that is quenched, a hope made vain,
And clouds that with sunbeams strive.
But still I am glad I 'm alive.

HYMN TO THE HARVEST MOON

Step out from your curtain of silvered shadow,
Arise from your couch in the wood's dim haze.
Oh, shine upon new-mown meadow
And orchard with tender gaze.

You come and the dew exhales to meet you,
The sap floods up into plant and tree,
The bosoms of women entreat you,
Your might 's in the swelling sea.

You rule the soul; there is none that seeks not
To follow you all your journey long,
Each breast that loves and speaks not
Is brimmed with a flood of song.

The anxious farmer your orb is watching,
As nightly you guard o'er his ripening grain;
Your red means a storm approaching,
Your paleness foretelleth rain.

Now a herald-like voice at the midnight hour
Seems to cry: "He 's coming, prepare ye his feast!"
He, a god of transcendent power,
And I, his worshipping priest.

Methinks in ancestral ages I 'm dwelling,
When in days of the legended long ago,

Men prayed to the awe-compelling
Dream powers in the moon's soft glow.

Each grove its wild incense to you upraises,
The mist of their sighs the fountains bring;
All earth unites in your praises,
O fruit-crownèd Harvest King!

FROM "FLOWER-SONGS"

I

As lily-blooms that quiver
When mirrored in a river,
Thus do you shine to me, my friend,
as forth my dark waves flow.
And though the autumn chills me,
Yet wondrously it stills me
To think of how in lilies' light I pass
where'er I go.

In dark waves of the river
No more the lilies quiver,
The waves revisit not the bank whereon
the lilies dwell.
The further, though, the clearer
Your face to me, and dearer;
I go as dazed with lily-scent — I hope,
and all is well.

MY FOREFATHERS

INTRODUCTORY TO "SONGS OF NATURE AND LOVE"

On history's page their names do not shine,
For humble and peaceful were they,
And yet I can see their long, long line
Stretching back through the ages gray.
Yes, here in the ancient iron-rich land
They tilled their fields by the river-strand
And smelted the ore in their day.
Neither thralldom nor pomp could they understand,
But, dwelling each like a king in his house,
They quaffed at their festal carouse.
They kissed their sweethearts in springtime's pride,
As husbands their faith they revered,
The king they honored and God they feared,
And calmly they died, satisfied.

My fathers!—in grief, in temptation's hour
I 'm strengthened by thoughts of you.
As you could cherish your lowly dower,
I will smile, though my goods be few.
When Pleasure beckoned with vine-wreathed head,
I thought of your fight for your scanty bread:
Should I covet more than my due?
You revived my soul like a river-bath
When I wearied of battling with lust,
And taught that my flesh I should rather distrust
Than the world and the Evil One's wrath.

I see you in dreams, ye sires of my race,
And my soul becomes faint and afraid;
Like a plant I 've been torn from my sprouting-place
And I feel that your cause I 've betrayed.
I 'll tell now of summer and harvest-time
With a merry turn in the play of the rhyme;
'T is the task of a poet to sing.
And should any poem of mine recall
The surge of the storm, the cataract's fall,
Some thought with a manly ring,
A lark's note, the glow of the heath, somehow,
Or the sigh of the woodland vast,—
You sang in silence through ages past
That song by your cart and your plough.

DALECARLIAN MARCH

(A TROOP OF DALECARLIANS RETURN HOME FROM THEIR SUMMER'S LABOR)

March to Tuna Town, lads!
O'er heath and hillside brown, lads,
March to Mora, lying
  Amid the mountains blue,
While pick and spade we carry,
We haste, and never tarry,
To where great woods are sighing,
  And little sweethearts, too.

How fine it is, my brothers,
To journey with the others;
Our pockets, heavy-laden,
Clink time with merry cheer.
The clarinet is trilling,
The fiddler, not unwilling,
Bears gifts unto his maiden
Whose wedding-day is near.

You gloomy old curmudgeon,
Don't be in such a dudgeon!
Your beer will sour with keeping;
Pour out a flagon there!
Dame, let your sauce-pan sputter
With porridge and with butter;
Here 's Jonas from the reaping,
And here is Singer Peer!

Ye men o' the miners' region,
Come join our marching legion,
Ay, join in our procession
To Silja Lake to-day!
Come and behold the land there,
The churches on the strand there
Like lilies have their station
In shining white array.

Behold now field and pasture
Arrayed in golden vesture!

The brooks and streams are plashing
With festal autumn sound.
Though dark the clouds above now,
We hail the homes we love now.
For us will lights be flashing,
And royal mirth abound.

THE MISJUDGED FIDDLER

He came in from the damp,
And he looked like any tramp,
For his trousers and his coat were soaking wet — oh my!
And a stream ran down the back
Of his dark-brown leather sack
When he laid it down and asked for a place where he could lie.

From the corner came a snarl:
"A common beggar carl
Must take a beggar's lodging, that he must — oh my!
Join my servant in the shed
And you 'll find an extra bed,
You can get a truss of straw from the hay-loft if you try."

The stranger's look was black,
And he straightway turned his back.
When he took his bundle up, they heard a *plunk* — oh my!

But the farmer shouted: "Stop!
Can you fiddle? then play up!
Scrape well and it will earn you a supper by-and-by."

With the first good fiddle-stroke
There were drums, and shots, and smoke,
There were ranks of blue with muskets all agleam—
oh my!
And the farmer's aspect shone:
"Well, if that 's your worst, go on!
As in my old recruit-years my blood runs warm and spry!"

But the second measure sang
As if sacred bell-notes rang
A soft birch-scented anthem in God's house—oh my!
From the fire-place, deeply stirred,
Then the good-wife's voice was heard:
"A fiddler such as that shall have our finest bed, say I."

And when next his bow he drew,
It was forest birds that flew,
It was pair on pair that danced with lovers' joy—oh my!
Then up the daughter sprung,
On the stranger's neck she clung,
And a pretty maiden's kisses gave the fiddler his reply.

But the farmer at the board
Spoke again a gentle word:
"Come, take a glass; I love a pretty tune—oh my!

It 's the same with Mother here."
And the shy girl said: "I fear,
Kind stranger, when you 're gone I can't do anything but cry."

He smiled upon the lass
And he took the brimming glass:
"I 'm not the shabby fellow that you thought — oh nay!
I 'm a right good organist,
And my name is Apelqvist,
And I 'll be your promised lover, pretty maiden, if I may."

Per Hallström, 1866–

INSPIRATION

Hot with sorrow or with joy,
Poet, be thy singing;
Free as from the eye's deep well
Sudden tears come springing.

Hot with sorrow or with joy—
Joy comes rarely, poet,
In so pure a form that we
In our song may show it.

Sorrow's hand avails thee more,
Which in darkest hour
Wakes thy heart-strings into song,
Plucking there with power.

Sorrow's hand avails thee more.
Sight is blurred by laughter.
Sorrow weeps, and in her clasp
Holds the world thereafter.

All the depths of her own heart
Sorrow hath inspected.
She in others' eyes may now
See herself reflected.

Bo Bergman, 1869–

ADAGIO

Waves are stirring, winds are playing,
Peaceful is their interflow.
Rye, through parted boughs half-hinted,
Ripples golden-tinted
To and fro.
Thou alone art elsewhere straying.
Softlier the pulses leap.
Far-off music, faintly playing,
Stills me nigh to sleep.

Clouds go past like lovely shining
Swans across the sea of sky,
Floating soundlessly and lonely;
Swans break silence only
When they die.
Through the day with dull repining
I have labored wearily.
I would join the lovely shining
Swans and float to thee.

Hjalmar Söderberg, 1869–

STIFLED MUSIC

BUNDNA TONER

The fairest that we would offer,
The deepest we would express,
We never in sounds may proffer,
May never in words confess.

Too fleeting is this for any
To capture in books or strings,
Too high to attract the many,
This treasure of nameless things.

But deep in our soul 't is burning,
It dwells there our whole life long
With dumb and impotent yearning
To be a poem, a song.

Sten Granlund, 1871–

SNOW AT CHRISTMAS

JULSNÖ ÖVER BYGDEN

WHITE are the heavens. This Yuletide morning,
White snow falls, oh, how prettily!
Swansdown and crystal it weaves, adorning
Tenderly land and sea.

Gently it covers the foul, the sickly,
Wrapping soft folds over mountain and dale,
Motherly fingers conceal them quickly
Under a shining veil.

Snow of Yule on my home-land sprinkling,
Beautiful, white,—I welcome thee.
Childhood Yule-days with great halls twinkling
Thou dost reveal to me.

Now yet again as a boy I 'm gazing
Out, with my face to the pane held tight,
Over the pines I watch the mazing
Whirl of the snowflakes' flight.

Boy cheeks are flaming with joy ecstatic,
Yule traditions take life anew,
Home is once more from base to attic
Garnished and festive too.

Are there not steps that tap in the hall now?
Is not the brownie pattering near?
Is not the tree lit? Has not the ball now
Started its joyous career?

Quietly, swiftly the Yule-night passes.
Sleighs at the steps await us in line.
Heaven is on fire with sparkling masses,
Brightly the torches shine.

Off then to church mid the sleigh-bells' glory!
Myriad candles! organ-notes long!
Life is as fair and rich as a story
Woven of starlight and song.

. . .

Snow of Yule on my home-land resting,
Long have I roamed the road of the years.
Now in the halls of my youth I 'm guesting—
Wet is my cheek with tears.

Karl Erik Forsslund, 1872–

HAY-MAKING

THOUGH still the blue forget-me-nots
From flower-beds are peeping,
And in the near-by meadow-plots
The grass its hue is keeping,
Yet scythes are swung
And rakes are flung
With motion brisk and sweeping.

The flowers fall and lie in death,
Sweet odors o'er them hover,
The scent of grasses and the breath
Of strawberry and clover.
And scythes are swung
And rakes are flung,
And soon is summer over.

Behold the men in shirts of red,
The girls' bright linen gleaming!
Like glowing coals the light they shed,
Most gay to youthful seeming.
But scythes are swung
And rakes are flung,
And flowers are but as dreaming.

Two scarlet poppies now I take
From where my blade was plying.
Let one, my partner of the rake,
Fade, on your bosom lying.
For scythes are swung
And rakes are flung,
We too shall soon be dying.

Oscar Stjerne, 1873–

SPRING-GRASS

Spring-grass is like youth, it
Must forth, it must out.
'T is warmth in the blood, it
Is courage a-flood, it
Is strength for achievement,
A faith above fact and
A hope above doubt.
Spring-grass is like youth, it
Must forth, it must out.

Spring-grass is like youth, it
Must out, it must forth—
'T will pass every barrier
And break through the earth.
'T is the promise of morrow,
And healing for sorrow;
'T is pain too that rages
Mid men south and north,
And burns out the ages
Of misery, madness
And crime and unworth.
Spring-grass is like youth, it
Must out, it must forth.

Spring-grass is like youth, it
Will rule before long—
'T will rise, it will flame in
Achievement and song.
'T will flourish, upspringing,
Till wreath-like outflinging
Its arms, the whole world it
Embowers,
Wind-swayed and murmuring
With seed and flowers.

THE LITTLE ONE SMILES

While we are still drowsing
In stillness complete,
My wee one is rousing:
Good morning, my sweet!

She rustles and flutters
In white little bed—
A twittering she utters
Like birds overhead.

As yet she 's but making
The soft chirping sound
Which stirs in the waking
Green valleys around.

Her wee lips endeavor
A song without word,
The prettiest ever
That dadda has heard.

Her cheek from the cover
She boldly uprears,
Her chubby chin over
The blanket appears.

A sunbeam now plays on
The window, and glows,
Then kisses and strays on
The vase with its rose.

All rapt she is gazing
With eyes round and blue—
To her 'tis amazing
And wondrously new.

The light so beguiles and
Attracts her and charms,
She sunnily smiles and
Puts up her small arms.

She dimples, our baby,
For sunbeam and rose—
She's seeing more, maybe,
Than we can suppose.

As day comes, adorning
The sky with its hue,
She smiles on the morning,
On life she smiles too.

. . .

Ah, when the snow flies, dear,
When Autumn blows chill,
May ever thine eyes, dear,
See wonder there still!

To thee be it given,
Whate'er be thy dole,
To smile up at heaven,
Thou wakening soul!

K. G. Ossian-Nilsson, 1875–

A MARCH FOR YOUTH

On with the hosts that toil, and on with the young and strong
Under our banner of red, if your heart will bear you along.
Would you feel you are young, and would you fight to be free,
These are the ranks of freedom, and young, ever young, are we.
While with song we march on and while we rush to the strife,
Eager our eyes behold the dawn of a fairer life.
We go forth like the Spring, which nothing can stop or stay,
We have sunlight and song, and faith in the triumph-day.

We go on to the fray, onward for freedom and right,
What is too much for one, for many shoulders is light;
Though the fortress of Wrong stands like a rock on its base,
We set levers beneath and cast it down from its place.
Down it shall in the dust, the gray-walled Castle of Guilt,
Over it ploughs shall pass and poor men's homes be built;
Down it must in the fight, and when the battle is o'er,
Then will freedom be ours, and Sweden be free once more.

We go forth to redeem our folk and our fathers' land,
Loosing Oppression's chain that binds them with many a band,
Kindling for them a torch, that Truth may be clear to view,
Seeking to shield their life from tyrant and savage too.
This land here is our own, where idly other men sprawl,
This is the land we cleared, we settled and ploughed it all.
On to strive for our rights! As sure as we're Swedish men,
If they have filched our land, we 'll conquer it back again.

BISMARCK

He stands there in his glory
Exalted to the view,
A hero in a story,—
The story, though, was true—
A man obeyed and idolized
And hated, yet we can
But say: from spur to helmet
A man.

Moustaches grimly curling
He stands there stern of mood,
His fierce lips might be hurling
Forth "iron" now or "blood."
The frown that gathers on his brow
Shows well what he is like,
The fist is clenched and ready
To strike.

'T was whispered in a fable
That holds perhaps a grain
Of truth, that France was Abel
And he to France was Cain.
And all mankind lamented for
Their darling son that fell,
And heaven still re-echoes
His knell.

When rolled the drums of battle
In valleys by Sedan,
And cliffs returned the rattle
Of "rataplan-aplan,"
Parisian, Gascon, Zouave then,
And Algerine so brown
Fell as if scythes were mowing
Them down.

'T is said that, as they rode there
Caftan by coat of red
And, smitten down, were strowed there
Beneath the hail of lead,
The Prussian king himself shed tears,
He could not watch them so.
"Mercy!" he cried, but Bismarck
Said, "No!"

Of those that charged so boldly
No squadron fled or broke,

But lonely hearths burned coldly
In France for that one stroke.
Then languished a Napoleon
Within a Prussian cage,
Then fell the lofty hopes of
An age.

Ay, this was not a fable,
The truth to all is plain
That France indeed was Abel
And he to France was Cain.
But Cain went not apart to shun
God's wrathful countenance,
He roughly raised to heaven
His glance.

He said with harsh defiance:
"In blood my meaning 's writ,—
The German States' alliance
You French would fain have split.
See crushed before Arminius
Low lies a Roman troop!—
Our pedestal is founded
By Krupp."

He stands there in his glory
With sword prepared for strife,
This ruthless man of story
In days of gentler life;

A man obeyed and idolized
And hated, yet we can
But say: from spur to helmet
A man.

Despite all Christian preaching
Of virtues more sublime,
Despite the kindlier teaching
Of this our kindlier time,
The ancient race of giants lasts
Down to the present date,
Is honored still with statues
And hate.

Bertel Gripenberg, 1878–

DRINK

My heart is rich as a brimming cup
Of gold and of rubies fine,
My heart is rich as a brimming cup
With fiery sparkling wine.

The wine it foams with a lustrous glow,
It shimmers with purple gleam;
The warm drops heave till they overflow,
And down o'er the edge they stream.

For thee the luxuriant clusters bled,
For thee is the goblet filled,
For thy sake the wine so sweet, so red,
In the gold-shining cup is spilled.

So lift the cup in thy hand so white
And drain it with eager smart!
Drink, drink of my seething youth's delight,
The foaming must of my heart!

YOUTH

Our time is a strife-time, a battle-time,
A riddle that 's ever burning,
A sowing-time of the springtide's prime
When sap in the veins is yearning.

Our day is youth's glad victory-day
Which brightens the air with wonder.
Our strength is the flash of the lightning's play
And savage billows that thunder.

We smite the world with the bolts we ply,
It shakes them from peak to hollow.
Soon quenched are the bolts, yet they charm the eye,
They kindle, and flame will follow.

AT THE END OF PLAY

Your glance is dark and your cheek is pale,
I see that you comprehend.
No longer do sport and jest prevail,
Let earnest come at the end!

You kindled in play a spark of desire,
Which grows ever more and more,
Till now it burns us, that ruthless fire
That burned so many before.

You cannot quench it, you cannot flee
That glow which bursts into flame,
Its hot cloud enwraps us fearsomely—
Then bide the chance of the game!

Let the blaze leap up as high as it will,
Let the flames to heaven uproll,
And oh, give thanks unto fate that still
Such fire is in your soul!

Anders Österling, 1884–

MEETING OF PHANTOMS

I IN a vision
Saw my lost sweetheart.
Fearlessly toward me
I saw her stray.
So pale! I thought then;
She smiled her answer:
"My heart, my spirit
I've kissed away.

"I to the breezes
Gave my life gladly,
Soon it was vanished,
Gone with a breath.
If I have grieved you,
Pardon the sorrow;
We are but phantoms,
Like now in death."

My voice I heard then:
"That is forgiven,
If unremembrance
Can pardon aught.
Give me again but
My heart, *my* spirit,—

You alone found them
Of all that sought."

Then I came nearer:
"Give me them quickly!
My road is long, love,
I cannot stay."
She never heard me,
She in the night sang:
"All heart, all spirit
I 've kissed away."

I looked aside then,
By memory tortured,
Shrank back in terror
Toward daylight's door.
I felt upon me
Those dark eyes resting,
Eyes that too well knew
My heart before.

Like wand'ring phantoms
Meseemed we both were—
A sigh, a whisper,
And fled was she.
No more could either
Help now the other,
We saw but, grieving,
That it was we.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

N.B. *In the Swedish alphabet the letters* å, ä, *and* ö *come after* z *in that order.*

Almqvist, Karl Jonas Love, 1793–1866. One of the most brilliant writers of his time, especially in prose fiction. In the lyric he was a follower of the Phosphorists. One of the few lyrists whose freedom of form approached *vers libre.* A pastor by profession.

Atterbom, Per Daniel Amadeus, 1790–1855. Leader of the Phosphorists. A pure and graceful lyrist of the idealistic type. A professor, first of philosophy, then of esthetics and literature.

Bellman, Karl Mikael, 1740–1795. The greatest Swedish poet of his century, if not of the entire literature. Composed his best work impromptu to music. Equally noted for vivid objectivity and for his dazzling mastery of complex stanza-form. Unsuccessful in business, he was given a sinecure position by Gustavus III.

Bergman, Bo, 1869– . A light and delicate lyrist. Also a literary critic and writer of prose fiction.

Bååth, Albert Ulrik, 1853–1912. Went in lyric poetry side by side with Strindberg in the novel, toward ultra-realism. Despised "parlor poetry" and wrote of and for the lower classes. Was also a narrative poet and a student of antiquities. By profession a museum curator.

Bäckström, Edvard, 1841–1886. Dramatist and elegiac poet.

Dahlgren, Fredrik August, 1816–1895. Best known for his humorous lyrics in the Vermland dialect. An under-secretary in the government departments.

Fallström, Daniel, 1858– . A prolific author, especially in the field of the love lyric and nature description. Follows the type of Snoilsky.

Forsslund, Karl Erik, 1872– . A nature poet of socialistic leanings and a spirited prose stylist. A school-teacher.

Franzén, Frans Mikael, 1772–1847. An idyllic, lyric, and religious poet, equally famous for serious and convivial verse. Born in Finland,

where he became a professor, he left his country after the conquest by Russia, entered the Swedish Church, and was made a bishop in 1834.

FRÖDING, GUSTAF, 1860–1911. The most powerful and masterly of recent Swedish poets. An objective realist of peasant life, also notable in autobiographical and imaginative lyrics, with alternate humor and tragic irony. Had university training and worked for a time on a newspaper. Lived a bohemian life and broke down from dissipation in 1898, after which time he never regained his former artistic power.

GEIJER, ERIK GUSTAF, 1783–1847. The first poet to awaken interest in Sweden's legendary past. He and Tegnér were the chief figures of the so-called Gothic Society. Patriotic and at times realistic. A noted Swedish historian and professor of history.

GELLERSTEDT, ALBERT TEODOR, 1836–1914. The most compact and epigrammatic of Swedish lyrists. A commissioner in the government.

GRANLUND, STEN, 1871– . Nature poet, translator, and newspaper editor.

GRIPENBERG, BERTEL, 1878– . A Finn, author of several very spirited and colorful lyric volumes. Esthetic and modernistic in tendency. Translated Oscar Wilde's *Ballad of Reading Gaol*. A viscount. By profession a private teacher.

HALLSTRÖM, PER, 1866– . Most famous for prose stories, essays, and his comedy *Erotikon*. Lived for a time in America. Influenced by English and French literature. Chiefly idealistic in his lyric verse.

HANSSON, OLA, 1860– . A critic and nature poet of great sympathy.

HEIDENSTAM, VERNER VON, 1859– . Highly cultivated by study and travel. The leading living poet of Sweden, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1916. An imaginative realist of great power and depth. Expresses the new aspiration toward nationality in his historical studies, prose fiction, and lyrics. At first a painter.

JOSEPHSON, ERNST, 1851–1906. Of Jewish family, chiefly famous for his genius as a painter. Went insane in 1887.

KARLFELDT, ERIK AXEL, 1864– . The most widely popular living poet in the field of nature and peasant life. Characterized by simple feeling and genial humor. A librarian, and secretary of the Swedish Academy.

KELLGREN, JOHAN HENRIK, 1751–1795. The leading satirist of the Gustavian Period, and secretary to the king.

LENNGREN, ANNA MARIA (born MALMSTEDT), 1755–1817. The best-known of women poets in Swedish. Cultivated the pastoral, social satire, and didactic poetry.

LEOPOLD, KARL GUSTAF AF, 1756–1829. Similar to Kellgren. A government secretary, whose poetry was satiric and didactic.

LEVERTIN, OSCAR, 1862–1906. Of Jewish extraction. Literary critic and novelist. Shows a melancholy and mystical spirit in his lyrics, together with great delicacy of form.

LIDNER, BENGT, 1757–1793. A brilliant emotional poet, though at times rather strained in style. Had a brief and unhappy career.

MALMSTRÖM, BERNHARD ELIS, 1816–1865. Professor of history at Upsala. An imaginative and tender lyrist.

OSCAR II, 1829–1907. Poet as well as patron of the arts. He celebrated chiefly the naval glory of Sweden.

OSSIAN-NILSSON, K. G., 1875– . The chief representative of the Socialists in Swedish poetry. Also a prose writer and dramatist.

RUNEBERG, JOHAN LUDVIG, 1804–1877. With Tegnér the most popular of epic poets in Swedish. In the lyric he wrote hymns, idyllic poems, and ballads. Of Finnish birth, he is chiefly famous for his narrative lyrics on events in the war with Russia. At first a newspaper writer, then a teacher, poet, and dramatist.

RYDBERG, VIKTOR, 1828–1895. The greatest academic poet and novelist Sweden has produced. Wrote historical novels and liberal-minded studies of religion. Translated Goethe's *Faust* and several of Poe's lyrics. His original lyrics are mainly noble and classic in sentiment, but include also very charming realistic poems. Earnest and optimistic

in tone. First a journalist, then a scholar by profession, he undertook studies in many fields.

SEHLSTEDT, ELIAS, 1808–1874. A pleasant and whimsical nature poet.

SNOILSKY, CARL, 1841–1903. A nobleman of Polish descent. Introduced vivid personal expression into the poetry of his time. Beginning as an epicurean, especially a lover of Italy, he changed to realistic and national themes. A diplomatist and chief librarian.

STAGNELIUS, ERIK JOHAN, 1793–1823. A philosophic idealist somewhat akin to Shelley.

STJERNE, OSCAR, 1873– . A poet of nature and of child life who is rising rapidly in popularity.

STRANDBERG, KARL VILHELM AUGUST, 1818–1877. Pen-name Talis Qvalis. A vigorous romantic and patriotic poet.

STRINDBERG, AUGUST, 1849–1912. An extremely marked and many-sided genius. Founder of the modern realistic school in Sweden. Scientist, essayist, novelist, and above all dramatist. Violent, often unbalanced; again, with an exquisite sense of form and beauty. His small volume of lyrics is characteristically diverse as to subject, running from nature to revolutionary topics. His life is too complex in its interest to be epitomized.

SÖDERBERG, HJALMAR, 1869– . Novelist, dramatist, and critic. Very advanced in his views. Partly a realist, partly an esthete.

TAVASTSTJERNA, KARL AUGUST, 1860–1899. A Finn. His lyrics have a deep and melancholy grace. An architect by profession.

TEGNÉR, ESAIAS, 1782–1846. The most widely known of Swedish poets outside of Sweden. Author of *Frithiof's Saga*, the most popular of Swedish epics. Chiefly interested in the legendary past of his country, but very diverse in his lyric themes. By turns witty, idealistic, and romantic. A professor, finally a bishop.

TIGERSCHIÖLD, HUGO, 1860– . One of the more conservative living poets. Winner of the chief Academy prize for one of his volumes.

TOPELIUS, ZAKARIAS, 1818–1898. A Finn. The most winsome and

lovable of poets writing in Swedish. Simple and popular in appeal, with a religious tendency. A professor at Helsingfors.

WALLIN, JOHAN OLOF, 1779–1839. A pastor, noted for religious poetry. His "The Angel of Death" is one of the best known poems in the language.

WENNERBERG, GUNNAR, 1817–1901. A humorous and patriotic poet. Had a prominent political career.

WIRSÉN, CARL DAVID AF, 1842–1912. A reactionary against the modern realistic impulse headed in poetry by Snoilsky. Meditative and fanciful.

ÖSTERLING, ANDERS, 1884– . An esthete of the more delicate and mystical type. By occupation a librarian.

GENERAL NOTES

PRONUNCIATION

LONGFELLOW justly describes the Swedish language as being "soft and musical, with an accent like the lowland Scotch." The following incomplete table is designed to aid the general reader in pronouncing proper names.

a, *e*, and *i* are pronounced as in Latin or German:

a like *a* in father.

e like *a* in fame.

i like *ee* in seen.

o is like *oo* in bloom.

u is a sound unknown in regular English, but like *ui* in Scotch dialect: e.g., guid. It is formed like *oo* with the lips more pursed. It is just between Swedish *o* and *y*.

y is like French *u*, German *ü*.

å is like *o* in hope.

ä and *ö* are like similar letters in German:

ä the same as Swedish *e*.

ö like French *eu* in fleur.

All of these vowels may be either long or short.

The chief differences of the consonants from English are:

g before *e*, *i*, *y*, *ä*, and *ö* is like our consonantal *y*; e.g., Geijer = Yeiyer.

j is always like our consonantal *y*.

k before *e*, *i*, *y*, *ä*, *ö*, is like our *ch*; e.g., Kellgren = Chailgrain.

stj is like our *sh*; e.g., Stjerne = Shairnay.

v and *w* are alike, both corresponding to our *v*.

The secondary accent and the other peculiarities of Swedish are too difficult to be treated here.

TEXTUAL NOTES

Pages 37, 38.

Askur and *Embla.* The Adam and Eve of Old Norse mythology.

Page 38.

Mimer. The giant who guarded the spring of wisdom.

Page 59.

Sandels. One of the leading generals of the Finnish army in the war with Russia, 1808–9.

Page 79.

Lappo. A battle in which the Finns defeated the invading Russians, July 14, 1808. *Uttismalm.* Also in Finland. Here Gustaf III defeated the Russians in 1789. *Willmanstrand.* Near Uttismalm in southeastern Finland. Here the Finns and Swedes were beaten by the Russians in 1741.

Page 88.

Sveaborg. A supposedly impregnable fortress on the Gulf of Finland which surrendered to the Russians. *Svithiod's strand.* A patriotic synonym for Sweden.

Page 131.

Magenta and *Caprera.* Where victories were won in the Italian war of independence. The latter was won by Garibaldi, to whom possibly Snoilsky refers on page 132, stanza 5, as "my lion."

Page 145.

King Erik. Erik XIV, son of Gustaf Vasa, was the most romantic of Swedish kings. He was a poet, a suitor for the hand of Mary Queen of Scots, and a passionate devotee of the sex in general. The happiest of his many love affairs was that with Karin, a peasant girl. In the end Erik was dethroned and murdered in prison, 1577.

Page 188.

The Old Mountain Troll. The Norse troll is properly a loathsome and carnivorous giant living in the mountains.

Page 194.

The Dance by the Roadside. Swedish names have been Anglicized, as frequently elsewhere, for the sake of directness.

Page 201.

This Dreamer cometh! The dreamer is of course Joseph. Cf. Genesis 37:19.

Page 202.

Karl-Johan. This is Bernadotte, Napoleon's marshal, afterwards chosen by the Swedes as their king under the title of Charles XIV.

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